AN INTEGRATED EXAMINATION OF MARITAL AND FAMILY COUNSELING

WITH RELEVANT CASE STUDY

A THESIS-PROJECT

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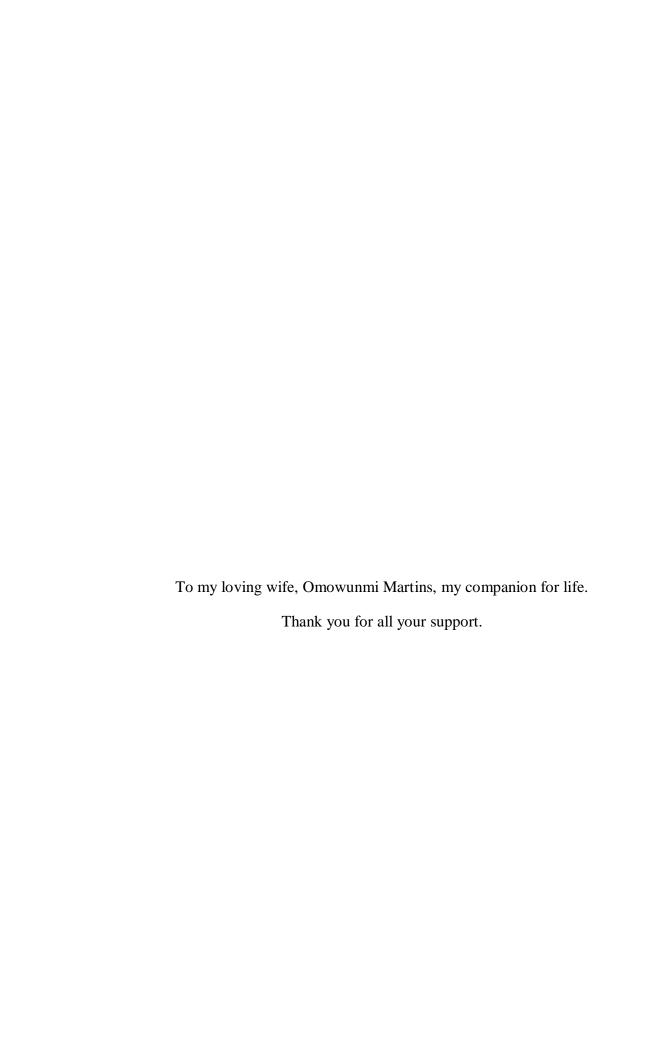GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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OLUSEGUN J. MARTINS

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To my loving wife, Omowunmi Martins, my companion for life.

Thank you for all your support.

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I attribute my admission to and completion of this Doctor of Ministry in Marriage and Family Counseling program to the faithfulness of God. I never thought that I could make it this far in the journey of my life. Therefore, my utmost appreciation goes to the Almighty God who has saved me by His grace, called me into the ministry by His mercy, and enabled me to successfully complete this program with His help. To Him I lift up my stone of appreciation and say, "Ebenezer, for thus far the Lord has helped me." To God be the glory! I also want to specially thank my wife, Omowunmi, for motivating, inspiring, and encouraging me to begin and finish this program. My two professors, Dr. Maria Boccia and Dr. Kelly Boyce, deserve to be thanked. They displayed patience, care, and love toward all of us in the cohort and provided assistance when needed. Finally, I want to thank all of my fellow students in the cohort for their prayers and encouragement. Thank you.

ABSTRACT

Once regarded as a sacred institution and a platform of holiness rather than happiness, marriage seems to have lost its sacredness. The institutions of marriage and family are currently undergoing metamorphosis; with the influences of modernism, postmodernism, technology, and socio-cultural revolution, marital and family dynamics are experiencing changes. Although some still adhere strictly to traditional biblical and conservative marriage and family systems, many have embraced the new climate of secularism, humanism, and social constructionism. From this perspective, marital and familial relationships have become very complex and eclectic. Therefore, a need exists for an integrative study of marriage and family counseling based on theological, biblical, and psychological frameworks

CHAPTER 1

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF MARRIAGE AND

FAMILY

Marriage is expected to be a sacred trust between two people until death parts them. It is, however, sad that some people perceive marriage as a casino game in which one either wins or loses. The typical attitude toward marriage today has changed from "for better or worse" to "for better or for good," and from "till death do us part" to "till divorce do us part." Some marriages have lost their original divine intention and expectation because "marriages today are like the house built upon sand—they have been built upon a weak foundation of dreams" (Wright, 1992, p. 11). These dreams are what Parrott and Parrott (2006) call marriage myths. They are unrealistic human expectations, reasons, purposes, and rationales for marrying, and the major reasons why many marriages, including Christians', are collapsing. The solution to this problem lies in demythologizing peoples' various unrealistic dreams and myths about marriage by constructing a biblical and theological explanation of marriage. Hence, this chapter will provide a thematic, didactic, and homiletical exposition of the Old and New Testament explanations of marriage's foundation, distortion, perversion, redemption, and restoration, along with theological implications.

Foundation of Marriage

Marriage is not a modern institution invented by man. God created and instituted marriage. The best place to gain a deeper understanding of what marriage is about is the

infallible Word of God. Genesis, the book of beginnings, provides us with classical information about the institution of marriage.

The first three chapters of Genesis provide foundational truths about marriage. Genesis 1:27 asserts, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." This statement is the *sine qua non* upon which the institution of marriage is hinged. Kostenberger and Jones (2010), commenting on this, observe that "marriage is shown to be rooted in God's creative act of making humanity in his image as male and female" (p. 22). There have been various interpretations of the expression "in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Breazeale (2008) observes that Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, employed this phrase to argue for male and female or woman and man possessing the same nature as well as being the same image of God. There are four constructed views of the meaning of the expression "the image of God" in man. The most substantive view is that suggested by Erickson (1998), which postulates that the image of God in humans is an individually held property that is part of man's nature and is often associated with human reason.

This view stresses the mental aspect of man by viewing the image of God in man as man's cognitive competence in understanding and loving God. The functional view assumes that the image of God in man is found in the act and exercise of humanity's dominion over the earth. Erickson (1998) further explains this view in the following words:

> The idea that the image is not something present in the makeup of human or the experiencing of relationship with God or with fellow humans, but the image

consists in something one does. It is a human function; the most frequently mentioned being the exercise of dominion over the creation. (p. 527)

Therefore, if the structural view emphasizes the kind of being man is, the functional view, on the other hand, emphasizes what man does (Hoekema, 1986). The third explanation has a relational dimension. Like other functionalists, Karl Barth argues that the image of God does not refer to what a man does or is, but that a human being is a counterpart to God (cited in Herzfeld, 2002). Based on his interpretation of the statements "Let us make man in our own image" (Genesis 1:26), and "male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27), Barth argues and calls this a 'confrontational relationship' between God and man (Hoekema, 1986).

This confrontational relationship creates an I-Thou encounter and experience between man and God, further leading to the human-God relationship and human-human relationship (Herzfeld, 2002). Emil Brunner, on the other hand, teaches that the image of God is to be found in man's relationship to God, responsibility to God, and fellowship with God (Erickson, 1998). The fourth view, which is the evangelical explanation, observes the image of God in man and woman as God's given mental and spiritual capacities that help individuals relate to God and to serve Him by their dominion over other creatures as His viceregents. It is God's authority given to man and man's responsibility in the discharge of that authority.

The implication of the *Imago Dei* in marriage is that God has given both the man and the woman the authority to rule representatively. In Genesis 1:28, God blessed "them" (man and woman) and authorized "them" (man and woman) to rule together and to be the joint stewards or caretakers of the earth.

Additionally, in Genesis 2:18, God said to Himself, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (NIV). Here we can see that the original intention of God for creating marriage was to provide a helping relationship that was "dependent and interdependent" (Matthews & Hubbard, 2004, p. 179). Therefore, marriage is God's way of providing adequacy for one's inadequacy. That is why the word "helper" is used and not "servant." Although the modern conception of the Hebrew word translated as "helper" can be misleading, this word is not meant to suggest subordination or inferiority. Commenting on the word "helper," the textual note (*tn*) on Genesis 2:18 of the New English Translation (NET) Bible (2001) observes that "The woman would supply what the man was lacking in the design of creation and logically it would follow that the man would supply what she was lacking." This shows that God expects marriage to be complementary rather than completing. Therefore, in marriage, the wife is the suitable helper to the husband in both procreation (Genesis 2:24) and domestication (Genesis 1:28). Even though the man is never called a "helper" to the woman, nevertheless, the man and the woman are entrusted with the responsibilities of ruling the earth representatively for God and they are not to do so androgynously or as 'unisex' creatures, but each as fulfilling their God-ordained, gender-specific roles (Kostenberger & Jones, 2010).

In Genesis 2:19-20, God met man's need for a companion by creating a woman, one and not two, female and not male, for monogamy and not polygamy, heterosexual and neither bisexual nor homosexual. The following statements from Genesis 2:23-25 show the dynamics of marriage: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." "The man and his wife were

both naked, and they felt no shame." The following five facts emerge from these verses to further elucidate the concept of marriage.

Marriage Is Receiving

When God brought the woman whom He had made from a rib of the man to the man, he exclaimed: "At last! This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called 'woman', because she was taken from 'man'" (Genesis 2:23, Amplified Bible). Marriage is about appreciating rather than tolerating one another.

Marriage Is Leaving

Genesis 2:24a reads: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother." According to the textual commentary of the New English Translation (NET) Bible, the verb translated as "leave" is from the Hebrew word *azab*. This verb means to abandon, to forsake, to leave behind, and to discard. The narrator in this verse employs hyperbole to emphasize the change in perspective that typically overtakes a young man when his thoughts turn to love and marriage. This suggests that marriage implies the severing of cords of dependence and allegiance to the parents (Rainey, 1997), and becoming interdependent with one's spouse.

Marriage Is Cleaving

Genesis 2:24b says: "and be united to his wife." This indicates that marriage is a cemented or glued relationship that is not expected to be broken. The verb "cleave" refers to sticking with or sticking to. It is used in Ruth's resolution to stay with her mother-in-law in Ruth 1:14. In this passage, the verb depicts an inseparable relationship between the man and the woman in marriage, as God intended it. Therefore, originally, divorce was never expected in marriage.

Marriage Is Weaving

Genesis 2:24c states: "and they will become one flesh." This is God's equation for marriage: one plus one equals one. In any case, this sets a precedent—it is the normal order of things for a man and a woman to become one flesh, a corporate entity; to leave their parents and to become their own corporate unit. This is a divine arrangement for marriage and excludes polygamy, in which a man marries more than one woman, either cumulatively or successively; homosexual unions; and other arrangements. The most successful, enduring, and natural corporate unit appears to be one man and one woman, with or without children. Furthermore, marriage also involves oneness through sexual intimacy.

Marriage Is Revealing

Genesis 2:25 reads: "The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame." Marriage is transparency, not secrecy; shamelessness, not shamefulness. The attitude of Adam and Eve is described with the Hithpolel imperfect conjugation of the verb bôsh. With the Hithpolel stem, the verb has an estimative-reflexive force, and with its two subjects, it is also reciprocal and should be rendered, "they were not ashamed before one another." In other words, there was nothing shameful or discomfiting about their nakedness—not for Adam, and not for Eve.

Distortion of Marriage

Genesis 3 records the entrance of sin into the human race and their consequent fall. These two unfortunate phenomena truncated God's original purpose for creating man and woman in His own image and for uniting them in marriage in the Garden of Eden. God's intention was for man and woman to be in fellowship with Him and also with each

other. However, on that fateful day, God the creator came to be in fellowship with His image bearers in the Garden of Eden only to find that His image bearers had disobeyed Him by communing with Satan. They had substituted fellowship with God with fellowship with Satan, and damaged their relationship with God and with each other. Distortion entered into the first marriage and since then has left its indelible mark on every marriage. However, this distortion brought God's judgment instead of blessing on marriage. The man, because of his passivity, was indicted for aiding and abetting the disobedience. The different curses God pronounced on the two of them were essentially socio-biological and socio-economic.

God's sentence upon the woman, according to Genesis 3:16, added pain to the blessing of procreation or childbearing and reversed the mutual relationship that existed between man and woman so that marital relationships would suffer from power struggles, inequality, hierarchy, subordination, and domination. For listening to his wife, three sentences were passed on Adam. First, he forfeited the divine mandate to dominate and subdue the earth (Genesis 1:28). Second, for him, work became labor and living became a struggle for survival. Finally, physical death was imposed on humanity.

What are the theological implications of the foregoing discussion of selected verses in Genesis 3? Theologically, the primeval couple's act of disobedience amounted to sin, and it was this sin that led to the fall of humanity. This fall had several effects on humanity. First, it led to dysfunction in humanity's relationship to God and to one another. They lost their fellowship with God, became spiritually separated from Him. Furthermore, the sin affected their relationships with other people. The man blamed the woman (interpersonal conflict), and a vengeful anger developed between their offspring

Cain and Abel (interpersonal conflict). Commenting on the malfunction in human relationships as a result of the fall, Erickson (1998) observes that "since sin makes one increasingly self-centered and self-seeking, there will inevitably be conflict with others" (p. 635).

The entrance of sin also has a holistic effect on the entire human race. This effect is called total depravity. Ryrie (1999) describes it as the corruption of every part of human nature; there is nothing good in them that can make them righteous before God. However, Erickson (1998) provides four explanations of the meaning of total depravity. First, it shows that sin affects the entire or whole person. Second, there is nothing good in the goodness of an unsaved person. Third, sinfulness or sinful nature is always countered by goodness and graciousness. Fourth, sinners can never free themselves from their sinful nature. The last major effect of sin on humanity pertains to the image of God in them. To this end, Geisler (2011) argued: "Even in their fallen state, human beings are still in the image of God; His image in people is damaged but not destroyed by sin. … In brief, sin effaces but does not erase the image of God in human beings; it is marred but not eliminated" (pp. 786-787). The entrance of sin and its consequences have brought distortion to the institution of marriage. This distortion naturally leads to perversion, a more escalating scenario in marriage.

Perversion of Marriage

With the entrance of sin, the fall of man, and the depravity of human nature, the institution of marriage moved from distortion to perversion. The word "perversion" connotes deviation from what is orthodox or conventional. The original divine intention for marriage has been lost. Man began to redefine his own concept of what marriage

should be, based on his hedonistic and egocentric fallen nature. Marriage became essentially anthropocentric—a merely utilitarian and contractual affair, with God, the originator of marriage, totally left out of it. As Matthews and Hubbard (2004) note, "Marriage is not the problem; the nature of people in the marriage is the problem" (p. 185). They further observe that because God's Law was broken in the Garden of Eden, "their relationships with one another (including their marriages) were bent and broken" (p. 190). As a result, the perfect will of God for marriage was replaced with humanity's self-will and, thereby, marriage became characterized by polygamy, sexual immorality (adultery and fornication), divorce, and genderization.

Based on Genesis 1-3, the original design of God for marriage was monogamy, one man and one wife. In Matthew 19:4 and its Marcan parallel (10:6-8), Jesus said that God created one "male and [one] female" and joined them in marriage so that "the two [became] one flesh." The two as one is the pattern for how marriage was meant to be from the beginning. Eve was taken from Adam's body and given back to him as his wife (singular), indicating God's pattern for the marriage union. God intended marriage to be a union between a man and a woman according to Genesis 2:18, 23-25. Unfortunately, this changed after the entrance of sin and the fall of humanity. Genesis 4:19 introduces the first polygamist: "And Lamech took two wives." Others followed him in the acquisition of more than one wife. After the Flood, there are many instances of polygamous relationships, including even the patriarchs (save Isaac), David, and Solomon. Although no passages in Scripture clearly forbid polygamy, neither are polygamous relationships ever mentioned with approval. Indeed, the problems of such relationships are usually highlighted.

The fact that polygamy was a common phenomenon in the Old Testament (OT) is not contested; it was within the limits of the law and sometimes also the right thing to do. The Levirate practice of marrying the wife of a deceased brother in order to ensure that the family line continued (Deuteronomy 25:5-6) would make a man bigamous if he was already married. There is also no direct prohibition of polygamy in the New Testament (NT), although in Romans 7:3 Paul asserts the unacceptability of polyandry: a woman who remarried while her husband was alive was an adulteress. Interestingly, there is no such comment about a man who has two wives.

According to 1 Timothy 3:2, monogamy was only required of those who aspired to be church workers. Such individuals (whether a bishop, elder, or deacon) had to be "the husband of one wife" (cf. Titus 1:6). However, even while allowing polygamy, the Bible presents monogamy as the lifestyle that conforms most closely to God's ideal for marriage. One can safely conclude from Genesis 2:24 that God's original intention was for one man to be married to only one woman. Although the passage is descriptive of what marriage is rather than how many people are involved, the consistent use of the singular should be noted. According to Deuteronomy 17:14-20, kings were not supposed to have multiple wives (or horses or gold). Although this cannot be interpreted as a command that kings must be monogamous, it is certainly a recommendation against polygamy, especially in light of the fact that having multiple wives will cause problems. This is clearly seen in the life of Solomon (1 Kings 11:3-4).

Another type of perversion that entered into marriage was sexual immorality in the form of adultery (extra marital affairs) and fornication (premarital affairs). Fidelity is one of God's expectations for marriage. The description of sexuality in marriage is found

in Genesis 2:18-24; this passage provides the foundation upon which the institution of marriage was built. Accordingly, it can be assumed that although the primary purpose of marriage is not sex, however, sex is certainly an expression of the marital union.

The expression "will become one flesh" in verse 24 describes the dynamics of sex and sexuality in marriage. Bailey (1952) suggests that the expression "one flesh" refers to *henosis*, or the oneness that occurs in the sexual union between man and woman. This oneness is the acceptance of each other and eagerness to disclose one's most inward being to one's partner. In marriage, sex is not only for procreation but also a means for relating and oneness. However, the Bible is replete with various incidents of sexual and marital unfaithfulness after the fall. Instances of adultery and fornication in the Bible include Reuben with Bilhah (Genesis 35:22), Judah with Tamar (Genesis 38:18), Hosea's wife Gomer (Hosea 3:1), Eli's sons Hophni and Phineas (1 Samuel 2:22), David with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11), Shechem with Dinah (Genesis 34:1-2), the attempted but repudiated move of Portiphar's wife (Genesis 39:7-12), the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11), and others.

Despite all the instances of adultery and fornication in the Bible, it is clear that God's standard for marriage is fidelity and chastity. God clearly prohibited adultery in the seventh commandment (Exodus 20:14). Also, in the Holiness Code God reiterated, "Do not have sexual relations with your neighbor's wife and defile yourself with her" (Leviticus 18:20). The penalty for adultery in the OT penal code was death (Leviticus 20:10), whereas the penalty for fornication varied. If a woman consented and they were caught, the man had to pay the "Bride-Price" and could marry the woman if the father agreed (Exodus 22:16-17). If a man took a virgin by force he had to pay money and

marry her, and could never divorce (Deuteronomy 22:28-29). If a groom discovered that his new bride was not a virgin, he could complain to the elders; if proven, the woman was stoned to death in front of her father's house (Deuteronomy 22:20-21).

According to Kubo (1980), "the desire for oneness through sexual intercourse arises from the urge to restore the original unity … Male and female are not independent but complimentary, and individually incomplete until they achieved the union in which each integrates and is integrated by the other" (p. 28). However, Ellens (2006) suggests "holy enmeshment" as a result of sexual union, saying: "Only in sexual union and in spiritual communion do we reach that profound, wholesome, and holy enmeshment" (p. 52). Bailey (1952) also observed that "only through the sexual act in the context of 'one flesh' *henosis* can a man, as husband, reveal to a woman the secret of her womanhood, and a woman, as wife, reveal to a man the secret of his manhood" (p. 62).

No wonder the expression for sexual act in the Bible is "to know." Several verses in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible use the phrase "knew" to refer to sexual acts in marriage (Genesis 4:1, 17, 25; 8:11; 9:24). Therefore, God considers fornication and especially adultery to be sins. They are aberrations of God's purpose, for sex is only appropriate within marriage. No wonder the writer of Hebrews strongly warns, "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral" (Hebrews 13:4).

Divorce is another major perversion that has derailed God's original purpose for marriage. God's intention for marriage was permanence. This is confirmed by the description of marriage in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (KJV). Various

interpretations have been posited for the meaning of the verbs "leave," "cleave," and "become" in this verse. Leave and cleave are covenant words. Leave describes a change in one's commitment and dedication from a person to another, whereas cleave describes the idea of joining or beginning with someone (Strauss, 2006). Therefore, when a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, he is abandoning one loyalty and beginning another.

The expression "they shall be one flesh" refers to the promise of loyalty, with God as the witness, which Adam made to Eve in Genesis 2:23a: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." This shows the seriousness of the marriage vow because through it "God is invoked … to witness the vows that couples make to one another and to break such vows is to invite God's displeasure (cf. Exodus 20:7)" (Strauss, 2006, p. 61). Therefore, marriage is not only a covenant but a permanent relationship. However, with the fall of mankind and their sinful nature, marital relationships also became perverted and divorce became an option. Jesus argued in Matthew 19 that divorce was not in the eternal will of God but in His permissive will as a result of sin. The three major grounds for divorce presented in the Bible are adultery (Matthew 19:9), abuse (Malachi 2:16), and abandonment (1 Corinthians 7:15).

Marriage is a spiritual-covenantal act, whereas divorce is only a social-legal process. In marriage, God makes man and woman one. Jesus stated that it is God who joins a man and woman together as one flesh in marriage. On the strength of this, Jesus concluded, "therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matthew 19:4-6).

Restoration of Marriage

Even though the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden led to the distortion and perversion of the institution of marriage, hope was not lost. God in His infinite mercy provided a way of restoration and redemption for mankind, which also impacted marriage. According to Genesis 3:15, God promised, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." This is called the *protoevangelion*, the promise of the coming Messiah; the seed of the woman, who would defeat the devil on the cross and restore everything to God's original plan. When the curtain was drawn in the Garden of Eden after the first couple missed the plans and God began to work out ways of restoring them back to Himself. Marriage was changed from a cosmological to an ecclesiological and eschatological perspective. This is the dynamic and focus of marriage in the NT.

Marriage in the NT is different from in the OT; two fundamental shifts distinguish the two views of marriage. First, although marriage in the OT was primarily a cultural concern for ethnic Israel, it is now a theological concern for spiritual Israel (the Church in Christ). Also, although marriage was the central human institution in Israel, its primacy was relativized in the NT by something greater, the coming of the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ, alluding to Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 in Matthew 19:6, affirmed that marriage is an institution established by God and that it is a holy bond between a man and a woman, to be entered into in His presence. Hence, marriage is not a contract but rather a divine yoke (Kostenberger & Jones, 2010).

In the gospels, marriage was considered an internal issue. Although the OT law was designed to regulate and control the external aspects of the institution of marriage,

Jesus established new expectations for marriage focused on its internal aspects. According to Jesus, adultery is not something that only happens externally (Matthew 5:27-28). He instead internalized the command in order to make it an issue of the heart. Jesus extended the importance of marriage by including internal issues. Marriage is celebrated in the gospels. At the beginning of the gospels, we have the story of Mary and Joseph's betrothal and marriage. Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding ceremony. Marriage is demonstrated as the norm throughout the gospel narratives, whereas divorce is condemned. With the exception of Paul, all of the disciples were married, including Peter. All of these things point to a culture in which marriage was celebrated as important. Although it was relativized by the coming of the Kingdom, it is still venerated in the gospels.

Paul expanded on the teachings of the gospels to demonstrate that marriage is a sacred institution. He taught that marriage reflects the relationship between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33). In fact, male leadership (5:23) and female submission (5:22, 24) within marriage are not an accident but are designed by God to most accurately reflect this relationship. This type of submission is not intended to make the woman a slave owned by the man, nor to make the woman subservient; nor is the man's authority intended to be hierarchical. Rather, the relationship is one "where the husband and the wife are partners who value and respect each other and where the husband's loving leadership is met with the wife's intelligent response" (Kostenberger & Jones, 2010, pp. 63-64). The sacrificial love of the husband in marriage is intended to point to the sacrificial love of Christ on the cross (5:24). This passage in Ephesians also affirms the

purpose of marriage as sanctification (5:26-27). Thus, marital union is not just about making us happy but also about making us holy.

The Apostle Peter taught that marriage is a spiritual affair. In 1 Peter 3:1-7, he taught that marriage is an issue of the heart. The spiritual impact that marriage can have is best seen in 3:7 when he implied that the way husbands love their wives impacts the effectiveness of their prayers. The writer of Hebrews highlights the ethical import of marriage. In Hebrews 13:4, we have the best scriptural passage for counseling or teaching against premarital sex. In his apocalyptic writing, John concluded that marriage is an eschatological issue. In Revelation 19 he described the marriage supper of the Lamb, which is the final picture of the union of Christ and the Church. All marriage on earth is intended to point to this final marriage in Heaven. Therefore, we should live out our temporary marriages on earth in light of this eternal marriage in Heaven.

Theological Implications of Marriage

The theology of marriage begins with the unity and triunity of God. The former signifies the oneness and indivisibility of God; the latter indicates the existence of three coeternal and coequal persons in the Godhead who are the same in substance, but not in subsistence (Ryrie, 1999). Marriage can be thought of as a reflection of the unity and triunity of God. It is a joining of two different and distinct individuals who are expected to become one. Therefore, just as the Godhead includes both distinction and unity, there exists in marriage both individuality and fusion. By implication, Christian marriage is both *unitarian* (each person in marriage) as well as *trinitarian* (husband, wife, and God).

Marriage reveals the relational nature of God; not only God's transcendence but also God's immanence. Matthews and Hubbard (2004) observe that "what God did in

creating marriage grew out of who God *is*. And God who *is* a profoundly relational

Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, existing in an eternal dance … of love" (p. 175).

God created man in His own image and according to His likeness (Genesis 1:26). He

expected him, as His image bearer, to experience the type of relationship which He,

Himself enjoys in the Godhead. Thus, "Adam needed to be in a relationship, not only

with the Creator, whose image he bore, but also with another of his kind, one like him"

(Matthew & Hubbard, 2004, p. 178). No wonder God asserts: "It is not good for the man

to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:16, NIV). God's

intention for marriage was to bring vertical-horizontal and dyad-triad relationships

together. Marriage is meant to be a relationship between the husband and his wife, and to

ultimately culminate in their relationship with God.

Marriage is also a means of understanding divine gratification—the pleasure and

satisfaction that marriage brings to God, not just to man. The Bible is replete with

illustrations of how God views His relationship with His people like that of husband and

wife (Thomas, 2000). God declared in Isaiah 62:5b that "as a bridegroom rejoices over

his bride, so will your God rejoice over you." God was seen as a loving husband to His

people. Hence, "God delights in us" and "We make his supernatural heart skip a beat"

(Thomas, 2000, p. 29). In marriage, God's children respond and satisfy the divine

pleasure through worship (cf. Joshua 24:15b). True worship brings peace and great joy to

our souls and connects us to God.

Marriage further reveals and teaches the holiness of God. In Ephesians 5:26-27,

Paul admonished: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave

himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the

word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless" (NIV). God is a holy God, and marriage is expected to reveal His holiness. Marriage is not meant to meet humanity's hedonistic or pleasure needs alone, but rather to please God. It is not only to make people happy, but to make them holy.

Marriage is a means of transformation, not just satisfaction. In the words of Wallerstein (as cited in Thomas, 2000), "A good marriage, I have come to understand, is transformative. …men and women come to adulthood unfinished, and over the course of a marriage they change each other profoundly" (p. 16). Matthews and Hubbard (2004) also observe that marriage for the children of God is a catalyst for transformation because, through marriage, they will become like God in their living together in God. Marriage can also be seen as a divine laboratory for shaping, forming, and transforming the redeemed people of God until they conform to the likeness of Christ. Finally, we learn through marriage about some of God's attributes, such as His love (1 John 4:7-12), faithfulness (Exodus 43:6; Psalms 89:8), and forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

Biblical and Theological Understanding of Family

Family is the logical outgrowth of the institution of marriage. There is no way to discuss family without discussing marriage and vice versa. Marriage is the divine institution that usually gives birth to the social-spiritual institution known as family. It must be noted, however, that everyone has experienced family life before marriage (Balswick & Balswick, 2007). What, then, is a family? Hester (1991) defined family as "the basic household unit which provides a person's central relationships, nurture, and support" (p. 443). According to Kostenberger and Jones (2010), it is "one man and one

woman united in matrimony (barring death of a spouse) plus (normally) natural or adopted children and, secondarily, any other persons related by blood" (p. 85).

Due to the changes in the composition of what makes a family in the Old and New Testaments, it is difficult to construct a structural model that describes what a family looks like. However, based on the cultural context of the two dispensations, various Hebrew and Greek words have been used to describe the nature of family (Hester, 1991). In this section, the author will present the biblical and theological explanations of family in the Old and New Testaments and the roles of individuals in the family, followed by a theological synopsis of family in the Bible.

Family in the Old Testament

Four major terms can be translated as "family" in the Old Testament. These are: (1) *am*, which means people and refers to the nation of Israel; (2) *shebet matteh*, meaning tribe and related to the twelve tribes of Israel; (3) *mishpahah*, which refers to a clan or a subgroup smaller than the tribe but bigger than family, a kinship unit related to the fathers' houses; and (4) *bet ab*, which means father's house, reflecting a male-headed, multigenerational household as the basic kinship unit in ancient Israel. Perhaps the term "household" is the best modern term to describe the family in ancient Israel, as assumptions about what comprised a family in that society included its socioeconomic profile. Some of these assumptions about family in Israel come to the fore in the tenth commandment, in which the Israelite was prohibited from coveting his "neighbor's house" (Exodus 20:17). The neighbor's "house" here refers to the neighbor's possessions; that is, everything in his household—his wife, servant, and domestic animals. Thus, a family in Israel was defined corporately not only by its human members but also by its

possessions, which allowed it to function in society. However, family relationships in the OT were concentric in nature; that is, the married couple (husband and wife) formed the nucleus of the circle, whereas the children were included in the next circle and the grandparents, cousins, and others were included in a further circle. Family structure in the OT was very broadly defined; it included not only the husband and wife and their children, but also other relatives such as aunts, cousins, uncles, servants, concubines, travelers, slaves, prisoners of war, and employees (Tenney, 1976).

The significance of the family in a covenantal relationship was demonstrated in God's covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:9-27), who was commanded to circumcise all male members of his family—himself, his son, his slaves, and foreigners. In the OT, the covenant found expression only within the context of the family. The Abrahamic covenant "had both an interior bonding and an exterior binding quality" (Hester, 1991, np). In other words, it was both a spiritual and social relationship. The importance of family is further seen in the provisions of the Mosaic covenant. Two of the Ten Commandments deal with maintaining the cohesiveness of the family. The fifth commandment regarding honoring one's parents was meant to preserve the authority of parents in family matters, and the seventh commandment prohibiting adultery protected the sanctity of marriage. From these two commandments flow all of the various other stipulations in the Mosaic Law which sought to protect marriage and family. The health of the family was so important to God that it was codified in the national covenant of Israel.

The OT records various forms or patterns of family. A household may have had different nuclear families. For instance, during the patriarchal period, the household or

family usually included the patriarch who was the head of the house, his wives (in case of polygamy), children, slaves, and others who were under the care of the patriarch. In this family environment, "nuclear families were completely swallowed up in the household and had no independent existence. But there was often strong attachment between husbands and wives and between parents and children" (Mathews and Hubbard, 2004, p. 190). Jacob had two wives, Leah and Rachel, and each wife had a maidservant, Bilhah and Zilpah respectively. All four of these women had sons by Jacob who were counted among the twelve sons of Jacob, and became the core of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 29-30).

The story of Ruth begins with a nuclear family: Elimelech and Naomi and their children, Mahlon and Chilion, who left their extended family in Bethlehem and immigrated to Moab because of famine in Judah (Ruth 1:1-2). After some time, the family became a single-parent family with the death of Elimelech (Ruth 1:3). Then it became an extended family when both Mahlon and Chilion took Moabite wives (Ruth 1:4). Unfortunately both sons died, leaving their women Naomi, Orpha, and Ruth (Ruth 1:5). Naomi returned to her deceased husband's home in Bethlehem and Orpha returned to her people and family. Although she was urged to return to her people also, Ruth remained with Naomi and returned with her to Bethlehem (Ruth 1:6-22), ultimately marrying Elimelech's near kinsman Boaz by Levirate marriage (Ruth 2:1-4:12). Their first son was Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David (Ruth 4:13-22).

Family in the New Testament

Several words are used to describe the nature of family in the New Testament. The word *patria* is used to refer to people who came from the same lineage and ancestor. The term *oikos* or its feminine form, *oikia*, which is the more commonly used in the NT, can have either a physical or social denotation. In the physical sense it refers to a house or a building; in the social sense it refers to a household, clan, or lineage. A New Testament household included a husband, wife, children, and others in the home like servants and slaves. However, the nature of family in New Testament times was more spiritual than natural (as in the Old Testament times). Hester (1991) observes that Jesus gave greater importance to relationships within the family of God than within the natural family. He also observes that Jesus provided a new understanding of family—the family of God and the family of faith. Therefore, according to Jesus, neither the nuclear family nor the household are the primary unit of God's creation, but one's faith commitment and faith family are central to God.

In the New Testament, the family reached its proper fulfillment in Christ. The family became the place where the Holy Spirit worked out the salvation of each member and provided stability and structure for life's journey.

During the time of Jesus the extended form of family was common; members usually lived together by sharing the same large house (Mark 1:30). The mother and daughters were responsible for domestic work, whereas the father and sons took up the other manual tasks. This is why Jesus undertook His father's carpentry work (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). The NT employs various terms to designate a child. These include *brephos* for a baby, infant, or fetus; *nepios* for a small child 3 to 4 years old; *teknon* for a

child or offspring; *paidion* for a small child before the age of puberty; and *pais* also for a young person before the age of puberty. In Jesus' teaching family life was essentially covenantal, with family members considered to be in a covenantal relationship. Jesus Christ taught His disciples that "The family of God is more important than your earthly family" (Matthews & Hubbard, 2004, p. 195). He revealed this truth to His parents at the age of twelve when they looked for Him on the return trip from Jerusalem. He said: "Why were you searching for me … Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49). Jesus considered the community of believers a spiritual family that was stronger than the natural family. To Him, the natural family could be an obstacle to true discipleship. Therefore, He warned: "I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man's enemies will be the members of his own household" (Matthew 10:34-36). In fact, when His natural family members were concerned and worried about Him, He told them who his mother and brothers truly were: "Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother" (Mark 3:33-35). However, it must be noted that Jesus was not downplaying the importance of natural relations here, but rather underscoring the fact that discipleship is a higher calling that transcends familial relationships.

The early apostles took up the issue of family where Jesus left off. In their epistles they emphasized the importance of family and regarded the new community of believers created by baptism and Holy Communion as their new family. They continued to uphold the idea of the brotherhood and sisterhood of all believers as Jesus taught them. For instance, Paul referred to Timothy as "my true son in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2), to Titus as "my true son in our common faith" (Titus 1:4), to Apphia as "our sister" (Philemon 2),

and to Onesimus as "a dear brother" (Philemon 16). Peter referred to Paul as "our dear brother" (2 Peter 3:15) and to other believers as "my brothers and sisters" (2 Peter 1:10). John explained the expectations for this new spiritual family bond thus: "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth" (1 John 3:16-18). It is also noteworthy that the apostles enumerated some household instructions and guidelines related to different members in a family, including even slaves (1 Corinthians 7:1-28; Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:1-9; Colossians 3:18-22; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

Family Roles in the Old and New Testaments

Olson and Olson (2000) define roles within the family as the ways couples handle leadership responsibilities and divide household tasks. In a Hebrew family, each person in the family had their own role. Men, women, and children all had different responsibilities in the family. It is clearly evident that in both Old and New Testament times, that families were separated by their gender and abilities. The men of the family had more power and authority over what happened than the women and children did. They gave their rulings, and their decisions were final. In order to gain a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each member of the family in the Bible, it is necessary to examine them in each dispensation or period.

Like other Ancient Near Eastern cultures, the Hebrew families of the OT were patrilineal, patrilocal, and patriarchal (Kostenberger & Jones, 2010). That is, the lineage or official descent was traced through the father's line, married women were allowed to

become part of their husband's household, and the father was the head of as well as in charge of the family. Hence, the father played several major roles in the family and in the community in ancient Israel. The father was the priest, religious leader, provider, protector, instructor, manager, defender, teacher, decision maker, and keeper of the family. The mother or wife served as the helper and companion in the home. According to Proverbs 31:10-31, women in the OT were expected to provide food, clothing, and other domestic needs of the family. They were forbidden to protest against their husbands; they just did whatever they were told to do and often feared that they would not be loved if they failed to bear children. A typical example is that of Elkanah and Hannah. Because she did not have any children, Hannah feared that she would lose Elkanah; therefore "she wept and would not eat" (1 Samuel 1:7).

During OT times children also played important roles and had responsibilities within the family. The first born son, known in Hebrew as *bekor*, was accorded great privilege and honor. Besides being the family's heir, he was considered to belong to God. Children were expected to respect and obey their parents and to perpetuate the family lineage when they grew older, even if through the "levirate marriage." Sons were often trained for battle in case they ever needed to defend their family or land; other sons were left to work at home or in the fields. They were also expected to provide for their parents in their old age. Daughters in the family had their own responsibilities, separate from those of the sons. They performed tasks such as fetching water because it was an easy task that had to be done, and they were capable of doing it while the men were off doing their own jobs (Genesis 24:13). They also cooked and prepared everything for the men in the family during the day and cared for the men at night. In a typical Hebrew family, each

member had their own responsibilities to fulfill for family life to run smoothly. The men were in charge and often fought in battles; the women bore children and served as midwives; the children usually worked in the home when they were young and began working in the fields and fighting in battles with their father as they grew older. Hence, in OT times each member of the family played an important role toward the realization of 'shalom' in the family, which formed the basis for 'shalom' in the community.

In NT times the roles of the husband and wife were symbolic of the relationship between Christ and His church. Christian men were to express sacrificial love (*agape*) for their wives (Ephesians 5:25). Even though they maintained leadership in the home, they were to exercise servant leadership. They were to honor their wives (1 Peter 3:7) and not treat them as subordinates, but as equal and as "joint-heirs with [men] in the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:7). However, family roles in NT times were patterned after the Greco-Roman household code. The Greco-Roman household included the husband and wife, the children, and other people living with them, such as slaves. The household members and the duties of each were always listed from the lesser to the greater. An example of this is Paul's Household Codes as recorded in Ephesians 5:21-6:9 and Colossians 3:18-4:1. The basic assumption for the hierarchical nature of the household code was that order in the household was a prerequisite to order in society (Kostenberger & Jones, 2010). The code usually began with children, who were expected first and foremost to honor and obey their parents. Jesus in His teaching affirmed this in Matthew 15:4; 19:19; Mark 7:10; 10:19; and Luke 18:20. But Paul elaborated further in Ephesians 6:1-3, saying: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother'—which is the first commandment with a promise—that it may go well with you and that you may

enjoy long life on the earth." He also revealed that children's responsibility to obey and honor their parents included taking care of them when they were old (1 Timothy 5:8).

It was the parents' responsibility to teach their children the act of obedience—obeying them and God. If children were expected to obey their parents, then fathers had significant roles to play in making this happen. Therefore Paul encouraged them not "to exasperate their children" but rather to "bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). The same exhortation is repeated in Colossians 3:21. It is interesting to note that the Greek word translated as "fathers" can also be rendered as "parents," because in its plural form (as it appears in both passages) it can refer to both parents. This suggests that it was the responsibility of both parents to raise their children to be obedient in the house, in society, and also to God. Therefore, during NT times, the father was to provide for and ensure discipline in the family, the mother was to raise and nurture the children, and the children were to obey and care for the parents.

Theological Implications of Family

Balswick and Balswick (2007) observe that the theology of family is ultimately rooted in the dynamic functional nature of the Trinity, as described throughout the Bible. Hence, to construct the theology of family, one must begin with the unity and triunity of God. The former depicts the oneness and indivisibility of God, whereas the latter explains the existence of three coeternal and coequal persons in the Godhead who are the same in substance, but not in subsistence (Ryrie, 1999). Living together as one family does not in any way obliterate the particularity and individuality of each member of the family. To have a healthy and strong family, "it is the distinction (differentiation) rather than fusion (dependency) that leads to vital connection and wholeness" (Balswick & Balswick, 2006,

p. 33). Hence, in every family, "both spouses bring their distinct selves (mutual interiority) while making space for the other (mutual permeation) so they can indwell each other (interdependence) and become an entity (union) that transcends themselves" (p. 34). To achieve this biblical-Trinitarian way of adaptability in the family requires a systemic approach to the understanding of family dynamism.

One of the assumptions of system theory is that members of the family "are attracted to each other on the basis of perceived compatibility of the rules each brings from his or her family of origin" (Becvar & Becvar, 1999, p. 71). Friedman (1985) calls this multigenerational transmission or self-differentiation. This, according to him, "is the source of our uniqueness, and, hence, the basic parameter for our emotional potential as well as our difficulties" (p. 34). Understanding this multigenerational hangover can help each member of the family to better adjust and adapt to each other in a mutual way. As Paul admonished: "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21). God expects the freedom of the spirit to reign in every family. Hence, the family should not be like a military base where orders are given and obeyed without complaint. Rather, it should be a paradise on earth where ordered freedom exists.

As noted earlier, Jesus redefined what it meant for people to be part of a family. For him, family was more than a social or natural entity. According to Jesus, "whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother'" (cf. Matthew 12:46-50). Jesus was not saying one's biological family is not important, nor was He dismissing His mother and brothers. His teaching here clearly indicates the theological implication of what family is all about in God's Kingdom. Thus, for Jesus, the most important family connection was spiritual and not physical. This truth was further

corroborated by John: "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:12-13).

The parallels are quite clear. When we are born physically, we are born into a physical family, but when we are "born again," we are born into a spiritual family. To employ Pauline language, we are adopted into God's family (Romans 8:15). When we are adopted into God's spiritual family (i.e., the Church), God becomes our father and Jesus our brother. This spiritual family is not bound by ethnicity, gender, or social standing (cf. Galatians 3:26-29).

What does the Bible say about family? The physical family is the most important building block of human society, and as such should be nurtured and protected. However, God's new creation in Christ—the Church, which is made up of all people who call upon the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior—transcends the physical family. This is a spiritual family drawn "from every nation, tribe, people and language" (Revelation 7:9), whose defining characteristic is love for one another (cf. John 13:34-35).

No theology of family is complete without consideration of the relationship between family and the church, as well as to family structures. Parmach (2008) observes that "family transcends the legal, geographical, and financial categories to that of a deep religious dimensionality of living" (p. 63). Family is beyond the conventional domestic classifications of nuclear, extended, or blended. Family should also be seen as an extension of the church, just as the church is an extension of family. Balswick and Balswick (2007) observe, "The church … is to be a family to families and a source of identity and support for isolated nuclear families" (p. 365). The church needs to help

every family to maintain the type of relationship that exists within the Trinity. Believers should not only enjoy *koinonia* at church, they must also enjoy the same in their families. For our community, the family "is to be the public servant of Christ's incarnated Gospel, not [the] sequestered sole believer" (Parmach, 2008, p. 69). Cahill (2009) also observes that the family should be understood through the Christian Gospel lenses of discipleship, social justice, and altruism. Therefore, a healthy and functioning Christian family is a social agent of transformation that seeks to make the Christian moral ideal of love of neighbor part of the common good.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how marriage and family were instituted by God for the enjoyment of mankind as well as to bring them to a deeper fellowship with Him. Unfortunately, God's original intention and purpose for these two institutions was defeated as a result of the fall, and they became perverted and distorted. Nevertheless, God in His mercy did not abandon His image bearers; He continues to find ways to recover His eternal purpose for marriage and family institutions through redemption towards its soteriological and eschatological goal.

CHAPTER 2

PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MARRIAGE

Marriage is customarily defined as the union between a man and a woman which unites them sexually, socially, and economically. However, this definition only views marriage from the sociological perspective. Marriage is more than a sociological union; it is also a psychological, biological, and spiritual union. Marriage is a holistic and a psychosomapneumatic union because it affects the spiritual, social, biological, and psychological aspects of mankind. Chapter 1 examined the biblio-theological considerations of marriage and family. This second chapter explores the psychological perspectives of marriage.

From a biblio-theological perspective, marriage is a spiritual institution established by God in which a man and a woman enter into a covenantal relationship. However, sociologically, marriage is considered a breakable social contract or agreement affected by many social variables. Marriage also has a psychological dimension.

The major focus of this chapter is exploration of basic issues related to marriage in the light of major psychological theories. Psychological perspectives are ways to look at topics and find meaning in them within psychology. Five components of psychological perspectives are the psychodynamic or psychoanalytic, the behavioral, the cognitive, the humanistic, and the biological. The psychoanalytic perspective focuses on the understanding of behavior in terms of unconscious motives, and how the unconscious mind influences on behavior. The behavioral position postulates that human behaviors are controlled by the environment, and the result of what has been learned through the environment. The cognitive perspective examines the roles of mental processes such as

perception, memory, reason, and decision-making as related to human behavior. The focus of the humanistic position is the study of the whole person by looking at human behavior not only through the eyes of the observer, but also through the eyes of the person doing the behaving. It argues that humans are inherently good and can take responsibility for their actions. Finally, the major concern of the biological perspective is to find meaning in human behavior by understanding neurobiological processes such as the physiology and structure of the brain, and how they influence behavior (Smith, Nolen-Hoeksema, Fredrickson, & Loftus, 2003; Zarden, Crandell, & Crandell, 2007). These selected psychological perspectives illuminate the following discussion of the dynamics of marriage.

Choice of Marriage Partner

Marriage begins with the choice of whom to marry. In Judeo-African culture, it is the parents who choose the wife or husband. In Western culture, the individual chooses the marriage partner. However, in the Christian tradition it is often both the individual's choice and divine revelation that determine the marriage partner.

The psychoanalytic theory provides some basic psychological explanations regarding the choice or selection of marriage partner. Both Freud and Jung argued in favor of unconscious factors in the choice of a marriage partner. The basic assumption of psychoanalysis is the dynamism of the unconscious mind. It is that aspect of mental life that is separate from immediate consciousness and is not subject to recall at will. Freud regarded the unconscious as a submerged but vast portion of the mind. Jung also talked about the personal unconscious—thoughts, feelings, and experiences belonging to an individual—as well as the collective unconscious, the inherited thoughts, feelings, and

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experiences of all mankind. Freud and Jung postulated that females seek a partner who possesses some of the characteristics of their father or primary childhood male figure. These characteristics are not something a person chooses, but to which the unconscious is attracted. For males, it is the characteristics observed in the mother that guide the selection of a spouse.

Jung elaborated by stating that it is not the individual's actual father or mother; rather it is their Anima or Animus (inner male/female).The Anima and Animus are unconscious forces, and everything unconscious is hidden from the conscious mind. Jung further argued that we project our anima or animus onto a potential partner. A man will fall for a woman who corresponds to his own unconscious image of femininity. The more someone matches our projected standards, the more we want to develop a relationship with that person.

A psychoanalytic perspective on romantic love is that lovers only project their ego ideal, the concept of their perfect person, onto the person to be loved. Freud argued that what a lover wishes he had been is fantasized to be present in his loved one. To him, "falling in love is an irrational, immature, and unrealistic response based on the awakening of family romances of childhood," because "The loved one is made into a parental figure and becomes the recipient of fantasies that emanate from the lover's childhood" (Stream, 1985, p. 12).

Based on his concept of narcissism, Freud argued that the choice of a marital partner is always based on anaclitic and narcissistic choices. In anaclitic choice, a man chooses to marry a woman who will provide nurturance or a woman chooses to marry a man who will provide protection. However, in narcissistic choice the person making the

choice sees himself or herself as the object, and the person to be married sometimes represents the ideal self or projected ego idea, the person he or she once was, the person who was once part of the self, and the person that he or she would like to be (Santas, 1988).

The issue of mate selection in marriage is a major concern in the field of psychology. Sternberg (1987, pp. 57-58) proposed the following theories on how marital relationships are formed:

1. Similarity Theory: people always select or choose mates who are similar to themselves or who reward them. This is like marries like.

2. Complementarity Theory: people select mates who are complimentary to them. That is, someone who is good at or does something that we are not good at.

3. Sequential Filtering Theory: people choose mates who share the same religious, social, and racial values.

4. Stimulus–Value–Role Theory: people marry those who possess the same assets, liabilities, strengths, and weaknesses.

5. Dyadic Formation Theory: people must go through some processes before they can finally decide who they will marry.

Hendrix (2008) adds another dynamic discovery concerning the choice and selection of marriage partner, called *Imago Theory*. This theory states that people were born whole and complete, but became wounded during the early nurturing and socialization stages of development by primary caretakers. Every individual has a

composite image of all of the positive and negative traits of primary caretakers deep in the unconscious mind. This is called the *Imago,* a Latin word meaning "image."

The *Imago Theory* refers to an imprint of the positive and negative traits of significant childhood caretakers. The imprint influences the choice of a mate in adult life. This theory argues that we look for someone who is an "Imago match"—that is, someone who matches the composite image of our primary caretakers.

This is important because we marry for the purpose of healing and finishing the unfinished business of childhood. Our parents are the ones who wounded us, but a primary love partner who matches their traits indirectly represents them. However, we move into a power struggle as soon as we make a commitment to this partner. The power struggle is necessary, for embedded in a couple's frustrations lies the information for healing and growth. The first two stages of a committed relationship, which are romantic love and power struggle, are engaged in at an unconscious level. Hence, our unconscious mind chooses our partner for the purpose of healing childhood wounds.

Hendrix's basic assumption for this theory is stated as follows: "To guide you in your search for the ideal mate, someone who both resembled your caretakers and compensated for the depressed parts of yourself, you relied on an unconscious image of the opposite sex that you had been forming since birth" (2008, p. 38).

In light of all of these theories, one could argue that the choice or selection of a marriage partner is quite complicated and multi-faceted. It involves both conscious and unconscious processes, and it is not the same experience for everyone. However, review of the literature demonstrates that love is one of the major factors that determines the selection of a marriage partner (Balswick & Balswick, 2007; Sternberg, 1987; Parrott &

Parrott, 2006; Worthington, 1996). Love is not easy to define because "it is a mixture of opposites," and because "two people rarely mean the same thing when they say, 'I love you'" (Parrott & Parrott, 2006, p. 36). But Sternberg (1987) suggests six types of love:

1. Infatuated Love, passion alone

2. Empty Love, decision/commitment alone

3. Romantic Love, intimacy and passion

4. Companionate Love, intimacy and commitment

5. Fatuous Love, passion and commitment

6. Consummate Love, intimacy, passion, and commitment

Worthington (1996) observes that romantic love is the primary reason people marry the person they marry. On the other hand, Parrott and Parrott (2006) argue that even though romantic love is always the jumpstart kick for the selection of a marriage partner, consummate love is needed to maintain and sustain marital relationships.

Sex in Marriage

Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, believed that the human mind is like an iceberg, with only a small amount of it visible—our observable behavior; but it is the unconscious, submerged mind that has the greatest underlying influence on our behavior. He hypothesized that human beings possess minds that are divided into two parts: an unconscious and a conscious. The conscious is what we are aware of on a day-to-day basis, and is only a small portion of the total mind. The unconscious, on the other hand, is much larger than the conscious, and it is where most of our psychological processes take place. Freud believed that the mind consists of three components: the "id," the "ego," and the "superego". The "id" contains two main instincts: *Eros*, which is the life instinct and

also involves self-preservation, and sex, which is energized by the libido energy force. *Thanatos* is the death instinct; its energies are less powerful than those of *Eros* and are channeled away from ourselves into aggression towards others (Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998; Santrock, 2010).

In his theory of psychosexual stages of development, Freud claims that at particular points in the developmental process, some body parts are sensitive to sexual and erotic stimulation. These *erogenous zones* are the mouth, the anus, and the genital region. According to Freud, every human being is driven by primary instincts, mostly sexual and aggressive. In other words, since birth, everyone possesses an instinctual libido, a sexual appetite. The five stages of Freud's psychosexual development are:

1. Oral stage, the time when infant pleasure centers on the mouth (birth to 1½ years)

2. Anal stage, child pleasure focuses on the anus (1½ to 3 years)

3. Phallic stage, child pleasure focuses on the genitals (3 to 6 years)

4. Latency stage, child represses sexual pleasure for social and intellectual skills (6 years to puberty)

5. Genital stage, which is the time of sexual reawakening (puberty onward).

What implications do these psychosexual stages have for marriage? From this Freudian theory one can deduce the role, purpose, or importance of sexuality and sex in marriage. In elaborating on the phallic stage, Freud developed the concept of Oedipus complex in boys and the Electra complex in girls. He maintained that during this stage, the child's unconscious desire is for the parent of the opposite sex. That is, in the Oedipus

complex, the mother becomes a love object for the young boy, and in Electra complex the father is the love object for the young girl.

He further explained that through fantasy the boy displays his sexual longings for his mother; he sees his father as an obstacle in his path and regards him as a rival and a threat. The boy perceives that the father has a special relationship with the mother which he, the boy, is not allowed to participate in. As a result, he becomes jealous of and hostile toward the father.

During this stage a girl substitutes her original love object, the mother, for a new object, the father. According to Freud, this is because of the girl's ambivalence toward her mother upon discovery that boys have a penis and girls do not. Hence, the girl begins to hate her mother for what she imagines the mother did to her; she begins to envy her father and transfers her love to him because he possesses the highly valued sex organ. This Freudian Phallic stage conflict is one of the major factors that determine adult relations with and attitudes toward the opposite sex.

Hall, Lindzey, and Campbell (1998) observe that in this theory of Oedipus and Electra complex, "Freud assumed that every person is inherently bisexual: each sex is attracted to members of the same sex as well as to the members of the opposite sex" (p. 56). However, with the coming of the genital stage (puberty to adult), sexual instinct is directed to heterosexual pleasure rather than self-pleasure, as during the phallic stage. The proper outlet of the sexual instinct in adults is through heterosexual intercourse (McLeod, 2008). The sexual energy pressing for expression in the teenage years can be at least partially satisfied by the pursuit of socially acceptable substitutes, and later by a

committed adult relationship with a person of the opposite sex. The genital personality type is able to find satisfaction in love and marriage.

With his psychosexual theory, Freud succeeded in removing the taboo imposed on sexual expression by the Victoria era of his day by bringing sex out of the closet and demythologizing various beliefs about sex. He viewed sex as much more important in the dynamics of the psyche than other needs. According to Freud, we are social creatures, and sex is the most social of needs. Marriage is one of the social institutions given to man for the expression and fulfillment of sexual needs and instincts. No wonder the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, 9 encouraged marriage for people who cannot control their sexual drive or libido, saying: "Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman. But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife and each woman with her own husband. … But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion."

Freud corroborated the fact that God created mankind with the ability for sexual feelings and desires. However, these feelings and desires are best realized and most fully enjoyed in marital relationships. As observed by Hyde and DeLamater (2011), "Marriage is a sexual turning point", because through it, "sex becomes an act of commitment, faithfulness, fidelity, and oneness" (p. 244).

Intimacy in Marriage

Erickson disagreed with Freud, maintaining that human development is impacted by psychosocial stages rather than psychosexual stages. Whereas Freud believed that the

major motivation for human behavior is sexual in nature, Erickson argued that it is social interaction or socialization. Erickson constructed eight stages of development:

1. Trust versus Mistrust (infancy to 1 year)

2. Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (1 to 3 years)

3. Initiative versus Guilt (3 to 5 years)

4. Industry versus Inferiority (6 years to puberty)

5. Identity versus Identity Confusion (10 to 20 years)

6. Intimacy versus Isolation (20 to 30 years)

7. Generativity versus Stagnation (40 to 50 years)

8. Integrity versus Despair (60 above)

This author's major focus is the sixth stage, *Intimacy versus Isolation*. Erickson (cited in Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998) argued that during this stage,

> Young adults are prepared and willing to unite their identity with others. They seek relationships of intimacy, partnerships, and affiliations and are prepared to develop the necessary strengths to fulfill these commitments. … Now for the first time in their lives, the youth can develop true sexual genitality in mutuality with a loved partner (p. 102).

In other words, during this stage every young adult is concerned with forming mutually satisfying relationships, primarily through marriage and friends, and also with starting a family. Hence, the prerequisite for genuine and lasting intimacy is the achievement of an ego-identity because intimacy implies the sharing of the identities of two people. At least in the typical male pattern, an ego-identity must be established before the possibility of marriage can be realistically considered.

Erikson (1959) observed that "only after a reasonable sense of identity has been established that real intimacy with the other sex (or for that matter, with any other person) is possible" (p. 95). What Erickson seems to be saying is that one must first find an answer to the question, "Who am I?" before one can find a partner to become complementary to this "I." As long as the "I" remains undefined or is still forming, the selection of a permanent partner appears futile. Hence, the giving of oneself to another, which is the mark of true intimacy, cannot occur until one has a self to give.

If marriage takes place before one or both partners have established an identity, the chances for a happy, lasting marriage are scarce. The syntonic outcome of this stage is intimacy, including sexual intimacy, genuine friendship, stable love, and lasting marriage. The dystonic outcome is isolation and loneliness, and if intimacy is not based on a permanent identity, divorce and separation may result. Young adults with uncertainties about their identity may shy away from interpersonal relationships or seek promiscuity without intimacy, sex without love, or relationships without emotional stability. How do all these Ericksonian psychosocial theories of intimacy versus isolation affect marriage?

In his triangular model of love, Sternberg (1987) describes intimacy as "those feelings in a relationship that promote closeness, boundedness, and collectiveness" (p. 38). Parrot and Parrot (2006) describe it as the emotional part of love because "Love without intimacy is only a hormonal illusion" (p. 38). Intimacy is one of the ingredients that make marriage and family relationship meaningful and enjoyable. It is also a part of becoming one flesh with one's partner in marriage because it leads to knowing and being known. As observed by Balswick and Balswick (2007), this is only possible through

listening, understanding, sharing, and caring for one another. Hence, the ultimate goal of intimacy is "the longing to be fully known in the variety of covenant love" (p. 75). Men and women differ in their perception and quest for intimacy. Often women view intimacy from the perspective of verbal communication, whereas for men it takes the form of shared activities.

Sternberg (1987) observes that intimacy always begins with self-disclosure. He argues that "to be intimate with someone, you need to break down the walls that separate one person from another … if you want to get to know what someone else is like, let him or her learn about you" (p. 40). He suggests ten elements of intimacy in relationship:

1. Desiring to promote the welfare of the loved one

2. Experiencing happiness with the loved one

3. Holding the loved one in high regard

4. Being able to count on the loved one in times of need

5. Having mutual understanding with the loved one

6. Sharing oneself and one's possessions with the loved one

7. Receiving emotional support from the loved one

8. Giving emotional support to the loved one

9. Communicating intimately with the loved one

10. Valuing the one loved

Clinebell and Clinebell (1970) suggest the followings areas of intimacy which every married couple needs to work on: commitment intimacy, emotional intimacy, sexual intimacy, intellectual intimacy, aesthetic intimacy, creative intimacy, recreational intimacy, work intimacy, crisis intimacy, service intimacy, spiritual intimacy,

communication intimacy, conflict intimacy, and attachment intimacy. No marriage can be durable without this priceless ingredient called intimacy. Without its unifying strength, marriage is likely to be unstable and in danger of collapsing. However, intimacy is not the same as sex. Although intimacy may include sex, it involves much more. Through intimacy, a couple learns about each other's true self, inside and out. When intimacy is achieved, the couple has a deep, multifaceted understanding of one another.

Attachment in Marriage

Bowlby was a psychoanalytically oriented ethologist who propounded and developed attachment theory. He was invited by the World Health Organization to undertake a study sponsored by the United Nations on the problems and needs of homeless children (Bowlby, 1988). The study has two parts: "The first reviews the evidence regarding the adverse effects of maternal deprivation; the second discusses means for preventing it" (p. 24).

After this study, he disagreed with the so-called "secondary-drive-dependency theory" of every child's tie to his mother and replaced it with attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988). The basic rationale behind Bowlby's attachment theory is that "healthy, happy, and self-reliant adolescents and young adults are the products of stable homes in which both parents give a great deal of time and attention to the children" (p. 2). The concepts Bowlby used to explain his attachment theory are attachment, attachment behavior, dependence, imprinting, and affiliation. Attachment behavior is not limited to development in infants and young children alone. Rather, it affects developmental domain at all ages. Bowlby further observed that "attachment theory was formulated to

explain certain patterns of behavior, characteristic not only of infants and young children but also adolescents and adults" (p. 119).

Bowlby (1988) described the various impacts of attachment on human development. The first is that it promotes close emotional ties and bonds to particular persons from the germinal state in the neonate and continuing through adult life until old age. Attachment helps in the development of emotional, social, psychological and physical bonds in all spheres of human life. Second, attachment helps in the developmental process of the child. Bowlby's conception of healthy and unhealthy individuals is based on the attachment level. He observed that "the pattern of attachment that an individual develops during the years of immaturity—infancy, childhood, and adolescence—is profoundly influenced by the way his/her parents (or other parent figures) treat him/her" (pp. 123-124).

According to Bowlby, attachment is life because it makes life meaningful and enjoyable. Every human being from infanthood, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood needs some form of attachment. Therefore, in the words of Bowlby (as cited in Walborn, 2014), "To dub attachment behavior in adult life regressive is indeed to overlook the vital role that it plays in the life of man from the cradle to the grave" (p. 208). Bowlby's seminal work on attachment and loss and the subsequent work of his student Mary Ainsworth form the core of attachment theory.

From the study of Bowlby's attachment theory, one can deduce that attachment is an emotional bond with a specific person that endures across time and space. Generally, attachment relations are considered to be stable and relatively unchanging.

Attachment theory is a framework for the discussion of interpersonal relationships between people, especially marriage partners and family members. Santrock (2010) observes that even though romantic relationships are not the same as parental relationships, romantic or marriage partners meet one another's needs just as parents do for their children. Whereas the parent-child relationship is critically important to an individual's wellbeing throughout his or her lifetime, a marital relationship often take up a significantly greater percentage of the individual's life. Romantic love is an attachment process. The partner becomes an attachment figure.

A person's adult style of romantic attachment is also affected by attachment history. That is to say, the emotional bond that develops between adults is influenced by the dynamics of attachment experienced during childhood. Applying the four attachment types (secure, avoidant, anxious, and the disorganized) to adult romantic relationships, Santrock (2010) suggests that secured-attached adults find it easy to get close to others, avoidant-attached persons are cautious in getting hooked into romantic relationships and tend to be distant from their partners, and anxious-attached people crave more closeness and are prone to be jealous, possessive, more emotional, and less trusting in their relationships. Therefore, the sense of attachment security in couples is characterized by positive beliefs about couple relationships; formation of more stable couple relationships; satisfaction with dating relationships and marriage; high levels of intimacy, commitment, and emotional involvement within the relationship; and positive patterns of communication (Akister & Reibstein, 2004).

Johnson (2004) argues that attachment is an innate motivating force that helps to provide closeness, contact, good dependency, a safe haven, and a secure base in the

family. Positive attachment helps to reduce tensions in marriage and family because "individuals who are securely attached have a well-integrated sense of self-acceptance, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. They have the ability to control their emotions, are optimistic, and are resilient" (Santrock, 2010, p. 376).

Personality in Marriage

Personality is another psychological factor that plays an important role in marital and familial relationships. In fact, it has become another factor in the choice of marriage partners as well as maintenance of marriage and family lives. Hence, the issue of compatibility in the area of personality has become a major concern in modern marriage.

What is personality? It can be described as patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that make a person unique in his or her interaction with the physical and social environment (Smith, Nolen-Hoeksema, Fredrickson, & Loftus, 2003). It has also been described as those elements of a person that distinguish him or her from others. In other words, it is who a person really is. Beck (1999) describes personality as "those non-physical features of a person's existence that give identity to the person" (p. 18). Personality is a psychological construct, but it is also influenced by biological processes and needs.

Since the days of Freud, the nature and the theory of human personality has received much attention. He suggested that all human behavior is motivated by unconscious forces; that people are like animals, motivated by drives (sex and aggression) and instincts. Freud believed that the formation of human personality occurred at the end of the fifth year.

Jung extended Freud's unconscious approach by focusing on character and temperament (Beck, 1999). According to Jung, personality and behavior are conditioned by personal and racial history (causality) as well as one's goals and pursuits (teleology) (Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998). As Jung (1954) stated,

> Personality is the supreme realization of the innate idiosyncrasy of a living being. It is an act of high courage flung in the face of life. …the most successful adaptation to the universal conditions of existence coupled with the greatest possible freedom for self-determination. (p. 171)

However, Erickson shifted the psychoanalytic paradigm slightly by emphasizing that personality and behavior continue to be influenced through adolescence and into adulthood. However, Rogers in his humanistic approach argued that human personality and behavior can be understood exclusively by studying how the person perceives himself internally. Hence, human personality and behavior are controlled by rationality and reason. According to Rogers, "How the individual behaves depends upon the phenomena field (subjective reality) and not upon the stimulating conditions (external reality)" (Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998, p. 461).

Other psychological theories and approaches have been constructed to further the understanding of human behavior and personality. For instance, social learning theory emphasizes the role of modeling and social learning in the development of human behavior, cognitive theory focuses on the role of cognition, and behavioral theory gives more attention to conditioning and reinforcement. What has emerged from all of this is known as the Big Five Theory or the Five-Factor Model.

Most of the literature on personality reviewed by this author argues that the Big Five Theory evolved from Trait theory (Beck, 1999; Smith, Nolen-Hoeksema, Fredrickson, & Loftus, 2003; Santrock, 2010; Sahakian, 1963). The major thesis of Trait theory is that personality is made up of dispositions that characterize every person. This theory focuses on differences between individuals as well as the combinations and interactions of various traits that form a personality that is unique to each individual. According to Trait theory, personality is composed of five big factors (Big Five Theory or Five-Factor Model): Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (OCEAN). The characteristics of each of these five traits are summarized below.

Openness to Experience: Imaginative, practical, interested in variety or routine, independent and conforming (The Experiential Life).

Conscientiousness: Organized or disorganized, careful or careless, and disciplined or impulsive (The Motivational Life).

Extraversion: Sociable or retiring, fun-loving or somber, and affectionate or reserved (The Interpersonal Life).

Agreeableness: Softhearted or ruthless, trusting or suspicious, and helpful or uncooperative (The Attitudinal Life).

Neuroticism: Calm or anxious, secure or insecure, and self-satisfied or self-pitying (The Emotional Life).

The question of whether similar or dissimilar personality traits are a source of romantic attraction and marital satisfaction has become a controversial matter. Some argue that partners may be more satisfied with those who differ with them in certain

personality traits because these partners complement them or offer them what they are lacking. For instance, Lahaye (1998) argues that people with similar temperaments never marry because like temperaments repel and never attract. Hendrix (2008) claims that a high-energy person will always be attracted to a low-energy person. However, Lililenfeld, Lynn, Ruscio, and Beyerstein (2009) disagree with this assumption, arguing that people with similar personality traits are more likely to be attracted to each other. Shiota and Levenson (2007) conducted a study in which they examined similarities in The Big Five Personality Factors for couples across a number of years. They concluded that although similar personality traits affords more marital satisfaction in the early years, birds of a feather couples with similar traits report less satisfaction in the middle and later years. Shiota and Levenson conjecture that among young adult couples, "personality similarity may promote feelings of intimacy and attachment … and may help foster a sense of equity in contributing to the marriage" (p. 672). But they further argue that whereas in midlife,

> The focus for couples seems to be less on the marriage itself and more on meeting individual and shared responsibilities. … At this stage, personality similarity may become a disadvantage with spouses competing with each other … when attempting to complete the same tasks. (p. 672)

Couples in their 60s may experience less disagreement and conflict because at this stage resemblance in personality may not cause problems. However, they may become tired and bored with each other if they become birds of the same feather that cannot fly together again.

Because each individual is wired differently, the issue of personality similarities and dissimilarities in marriage and family relationships cannot be downplayed. Whether a marriage partner has a similar or opposite personality to oneself, personality helps us to understand, respect, value, and accept the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of every individual in marriage and family.

Personality is made up of character and temperament. Character is the volitional aspect of personality, whereas temperament is the emotional. Allport (cited in Hogan, 2006) observes, "Character is personality evaluated, and personality is character devaluated" (p. 30). He defines temperament as,

> The characteristic phenomena of an individual's emotional nature, including his susceptibility to emotional stimulation, his customary strength and speed of response, the quality of his prevailing mood, and all peculiarities of fluctuation and intensity in mood; these phenomena being regarded as dependent upon constitution make-up and therefore largely hereditary in origin. (p. 31)

Personality affects and influences every facet of human life. It is reflected in parenting styles, personal and interpersonal relationship patterns, choices of vocation and career, communication styles, social behavior and interactions, family relationships, communication in marriage, displays of love and affection, and marital relationships.

The Five Factor Model of personality with its five components (OCEAN) has now been declassified into four models. Myers and Myers (1995) developed what is now known as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) which comprises the following four dichotomies: Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I), Sensing (S) or Intuition (N), Thinking (T) or Feeling (F), and Judging (J) or Perceiving (P). Other relevant studies have divided

personality into extrovert and introvert and into four: sanguine and choleric (extrovert) and melancholy and phlegmatic (introvert) (Littauer, 2006; Leman, 2002; Lahaye, 1994). Fisher (2009) described the four components using the terms The Explorer, The Builder, The Director, and The Negotiator. Furthermore, Shackelford (2003) named the four as The Reasoner or The Reflector, The Relator or The Activator, The Planner or The Examiner, and The Journeyer or The Envisioner.

The scope and limitations of this chapter do not allow for a detailed explanation of each of these four components of human personality. Nevertheless, it is important to note that personality difference, not gender difference, is one of the major causes of conflict and dissatisfaction in marriage and family. Rather than appreciating and accepting these personality differences, many individuals try to change their spouses to become like them. They may not be aware that "transformation comes when you consider these differences as opportunities for appreciation and self-development" (Shackelford, 2003, p. 6). One can therefore say that in marriage personality can enhance both attraction to and detraction from.

The reality of personality in individual lives is unavoidable. It can cause harmony and disharmony in marriage and family. Hence, one task for every couple is to find ways to regulate personality differences and/or similarities toward enhancing enjoyable marital and family relationships. Balswick and Balswick (2006) advice:

It is so essential to show grace by valuing and accepting our natural differences. The covenant love that urges us to put our spouse as the priority means we must make every effort to respect personality difference … Every couple needs an extra

dose of grace in working out the dynamics of their contrasting personalities. (p. 54)

They conclude that a couple must also make every effort "to identify both the strengths and limitations of various personality traits … consider the impact of these traits on their interactive pattern … determine how to utilize their differences to their advantage" (pp. 54-55).

Emotional Intelligence in Marriage

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been defined as "ability to perceive and express emotions accurately and adaptively, to understand emotion and emotional knowledge, to use feelings to facilitate thought and to manage emotions in oneself and others" (Santrock, 2010, p. 285). Applying the concept of EI to marriage, Goleman (1995) argues that emotional intelligence plays an important role in creating and sustaining relationships. The basic assumption of EI in marriage is that every happy marriage is an emotionally intelligent marriage. In such marriages, the two partners are committed to both self- and other-awareness. Furthermore, the two partners also have a capacity and inclination to manage their own emotional state as well as their impact on the other. The four major components of EI are:

1. Perceiving emotions—the ability to read the emotions of other people as well as your own in order to know how to respond adequately

2. Using emotions—the ability to apply and maximize emotions for thinking as well as for solving problems

3. Understanding emotions—the ability to know the meaning as well as the reason for certain emotional reactions

4. Managing emotions—the ability to know how to control emotions in yourself as well as in other people (Smith, Nolen-Hoeksema, Fredrickson, & Loftus, 2003).

With regard to marriage and family, the basic assumption of Emotional Intelligence is that people with high EI scores are more successful in interpersonal relationships.

Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (2000) suggest potential links between EI and relationship quality among couples. Carton, Kessler, and Pape (1999) argue that sensitivity and accuracy in nonverbal communication are indications of happiness in marriage. One significant area that has been explored and applied by EI to marital relationship is the perception of emotion. The assumption is that the higher the EI, the greater the relationship satisfaction in couples; whereas the lower the EI, the more dissatisfaction in the relationship and the more crises occur. Fitness (2001) also observes that higher EI may lead to better management of disagreements, which in turn might predict less conflict and higher relationship satisfaction because "higher EI might enable people to more effectively manage the delicate emotional negotiations involved in seeking and granting forgiveness'' (p. 106).

Brackett, Warner, and Bosco (2005) report that "couples in which both partners were low on EI tended to report significantly poorer relationship outcomes than couples in which one or both partners were high in EI" (p. 208). Hence, Emotional Intelligence helps couples to understand one another as well as helping them to perceive their emotions and feelings. Each would know what to say and what to do to boost the other's morale. In corroborating this hypothesis, Brackett, Warner, and Bosco conclude:

The more total EI a couple had to draw upon as a resource, the better their relationship outcomes would be. Thus we expected that couples made up of two high-EI partners would have the most positive relationship outcomes and that couples made up of two low-EI partners would have the least positive relationship outcomes. (p. 209)

Based on these facts, the role of emotional intelligence in issues of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in marital and family relationships cannot be overlooked. It will affect and reflect on how well people can listen, communicate, initiate change, follow through, and deal with problems in marriage and family relationships.

Goleman (2006) explains further the importance of emotional intelligence or state of emotion in marriage. Drawing on Freud's claim that psychotherapists who are psychoanalysts always feel in their bodies the emotions their clients are feeling, Goleman argues that whenever married couples argue over a matter, each partner would feel in his or her body the discomfort that the other is feeling. According to Goleman (2006),

The more similar the physiological state of two people at a given moment, the more easily they can sense each other's feelings" and "when we attune ourselves to someone, we can't help but feel along with them, if only subtly. We resonate so similarly that their emotions enter us—even when we don't want them to. (pp. 25-26)

Goleman calls this emotional state "empathy," and he regards it as the ability to sense the emotion of another person.

Elaborating, he observes, "This biological dance occurs when anyone empathizes with someone else—the empathizer subtly shares the physiological state of the person

with whom she attunes" (Goleman, 2006, p. 186). Furthermore, couples who have lived together for many years and who experience emotional satisfaction are prone to facial resemblance. He further explains the dynamics of this phenomenon as follows:

> Since each emotion tenses and relaxes a specific set of facial muscles, as partners smile or frown in unison they strengthen the parallel set of muscles. This gradually molds similar ridges, wrinkles and lines, making their faces appear more alike. (p. 218)

Emphasizing the physiological implications of emotional state or emotional intelligence in marriage, he observes,

> In dating, the most important predictor of whether the relationship will last is how many good feelings the couple shares. In marriages, it's how well the couple can handle conflicts. And in later years of a long marriage, it's again how many good feelings the couple shares. (p. 219)

Based on the discussion so far, one could say that the focus of emotional intelligence in marriage and family is to help couples understand what it means to be intelligent about their emotions—that is; to be self-aware, to know their feelings and why they feel that way. It also helps to understand how to manage those emotions. Emotional intelligence is about sensing how other people are feeling, knowing the other person's emotions, and then finally managing all those emotions in the way that is best for everyone. For instance, Goleman (2006) observes that women are better than men when it comes to empathy, and men are better than women when it comes to managing distressing emotions. He maintains that women differ from men in expressing emotions. According to Goleman, if another person is upset or emotionally disturbed, a woman's

brain usually stays with those feelings, whereas a man's brain does something else. Men sense the feelings for a moment, then tune out the emotions and switch to other areas of the brain to try to solve the problem that is creating the disturbance. No wonder women always complain that men are tuned out emotionally and men accuse women of being too emotional. This is a result of differences in their emotional intelligence.

Arguing for the need for emotional intelligence in marriage, Gottman (1999) observes,

> Happily married couples aren't smarter, richer, or more psychologically astute than others, but in their day-to-day lives, they have hit upon a dynamic that keeps their negative thoughts and feelings about each other … from overwhelming their positive ones. They have what I call an emotionally intelligent marriage. (p. 3)

That is to say, "The more emotionally intelligent a couple – the better able they are to understand, honor, and respect each other and their marriage" (p. 4).

Implications of Psychological Perspectives on Marriage and Family

This chapter is a composite of explanations of various psychological perspectives for understanding some selected dynamics in marriage. Although marriage in the postmodern culture involves a legal contract with enormous social implications, it has a psychological connection as well. It consists of both conscious and unconscious factors.

The various psychological perspectives of marriage examined so far sometimes have far-reaching effects on family systems. Schneewind (1989) observes that the psychological makeup of family life always has an important influence on how a family's potential eco-context is actually utilized. This is similar to the conclusion of Belsky (1984) that personality and the psychological wellbeing of parents have the greatest

influence on their parental functioning. In other words, effective parenting is possible when the personal and psychological resources of parents are in positive mode.

A strong marital relationship will serve as the catalyst for a healthy and functional family. However, it must be noted here that everyone in a family brings into it certain psychological nuances and idiosyncrasies. Hence, understanding the psychological dynamics of family goes beyond individual approaches to a broader psychological perspective known as "family systems theory." Balswick and Balswick (2007) define family systems theory as "a holistic approach that understands every part of family life in terms of the family as a whole" (p. 38). They argue that the purpose of family systems theory is to provide an understanding of each person in the family by paying attention to how that person relates to other members in the family. The major assumption of family system theory is that individuals cannot be understood in isolation from one another—families are systems of interconnected and interdependent individuals, none of whom can be understood in isolation from the system.

Every family system contains a number of small groups usually made up of 2 or 3 people. The relationships between these people are known as subsystems, coalitions, or alliances. Each subsystem has its own rules, boundaries, and unique characteristics. However, each family usually sets boundaries that will determine or define the kind of family systems they will adopt and allow. The most important point is that each person in the family has a certain psychological uniqueness that makes the family healthy or unhealthy. The concept of circular causality states that in family systems, each family member's behavior is caused by and causes the other family members' behaviors. They each impact the other circularly (Becvar & Becvar, 1999). Both the negative and positive

effects of this are revealed in the levels of cohesion and flexibility that exist within the family. Hence, interplay of psychological perspectives occurs in marriage and family systems.

For instance, attachment is significant in the dynamic of family systems. It has been observed that mothers' preoccupied attachment and children's ambivalent attachment may lead to overly close or enmeshed mother-child dyads (Rothbaum, Rosen, Ujiie, & Uchida, 2002). In other words, adaptive and dysfunctional early mother-child relationships may be the bases for enmeshment or lack of differentiation in family systems. A child who experiences the insecure attachment style in childhood may grow into adulthood repeating the same style in his or her marital dyad or family triad. Furthermore, attachment theory helps clarify the process of parentification as it involves the relationship between child and parent and/or caregiver. As a result of acting as caretaker to their parents and siblings while striving to raise themselves, during adulthood parentified children may develop dysfunctional relationships within their marriages and family systems (Hooper, 2014).

The role of Emotional Intelligence in marriage and family cannot be downplayed. God has created and wired humanity with a great capacity for varied emotions. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to process and manage all our God-given emotions in healthy ways. Hence, emotional intelligence components—understanding our emotions and others' emotions, proper usage of emotions in decision making, and regulation and management of emotions—play a significant role in effective marital satisfaction (Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 2000; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). In other words, factors such as emotional awareness, emotional expression, emotional regulation,

and empathy influence a couple's relationship, and they also affect the quality of family systems.

It has also been observed that the condition of family systems plays an important role in the emotional development of children in every family (Salovey et al., 2000). The family is the environment where children learn to use their faculties and understand as well as cope with the physical world; therefore a healthy family relationship greatly influences the emotional intelligence of the children. Hence, parents who are emotionally sensitive to their children's emotional needs usually have emotionally intelligent children. In other words, parents' EI has an impact on the children's emotional learning.

Conclusion

The various psychological approaches and perspectives for understanding marriage and family systems discussed in this chapter show that the two institutions have some degree of psychological basis. Even though marriage and family are social institutions, the dynamics of individuals within them are better understood through psychological explanations. The next chapter focuses on the integration of these psychological perspectives on marriage and family with the biblical and theological perspectives discussed in the first chapter.

CHAPTER 3

INTEGRATION OF BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL

PERSPECTIVES ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

The integration of theology and psychology has become a significant issue of debate among Christian and secular counselors. Due to ontological and epistemological presuppositions, attempts to create a conceptual integration between the two have always proven difficult. Ontologically, psychology is concerned with the material aspect of monism that says that physical matter is the only reality. Meanwhile, theology focuses on dualism that claims that reality is both material and spiritual. The epistemological presupposition postulates that knowledge in psychology is based on scientific observation through sensory experiences, whereas in theology knowledge is centered on revelation and nature (Entwistle, 2010). Hence, the relationship between psychology and theology can be cast using the words of Tertullian: "What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between Academy and the church? … With our faith, we desire no further belief" (cited in Entwistle, 2010, p. 8). For Tertullian, human thinking and biblical truth could not be reconciled. To frame the issue for the modern arena, you must choose between pursuing knowledge through human reason and psychology (Athens) or Christian faith and theology (Jerusalem), not both.

Blamires (2005) modified Tertullian's antithetic view of Athens and Jerusalem by turning it into two basic ways of thinking about the world—namely, secular thinking and Christian thinking. He argues that our thinking is always influenced by material concerns and a Christian worldview. According to Blamires,

To think secularly is to think within a frame of reference bounded by the limits of our life on earth. … To think Christianly is to accept all things with the mind as related, directly or indirectly, to man's eternal destiny as the redeemed and chosen child of God. (p. 44)

His basic assumption is that secular thinking is useful only if it is accompanied by a Christian worldview. In other words, as observed by Entwistle (2010), "If we understand that all of what God created was good, then we must avoid creating an artificial separation between that which is sacred and that which is secular" (pp. 9-10).

What then is the problem? McMinn and Campbell (2007) state both the problem and the solution to the issue of integrating theology and psychology as follows:

Some believe that faith is enough, that psychology is irrelevant and perhaps dangerous. Others believe that psychology is enough, that faith ought to be left outside the counseling office." However, "Integrationists believe that some sort of reciprocal interaction between faith and psychology is the best way to gain a comprehensive understanding of personality and counseling. (p. 23)

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the nuances, the dynamics, and the intricacies that are involved in the integration of the biblical/theological perspectives discussed in chapter 1 with the psychological perspectives in chapter 2.

Toward Definition of Integration

Integration is a term used to delineate the relationship that exists between psychology and the Christian faith. Entwistle (2010) defines integration as "putting things together into a whole" (p. 217). An example of this, according to Entwistle, is what usually happens when two companies decide to merge and combine their work forces.

They let go of some workers and relocate, reallocate, and reassign others in the hope of creating a functional operation. The word "integration" is derived from the same cognate root as the mathematical term "integer." Therefore it emphasizes unity instead of fraction (Enwistle, 2010). Integration has also been defined as "The combining of diverse parts into a complex whole; a complex state the parts of which are distinguishable" (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1065), and as the "bringing together, incorporating parts into a whole, making up, combining or completing to produce a whole or a larger unit" (Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, 2001, p. 1521). Therefore, one could say that integration is synonymous with amalgamation, eclecticism, and synthesis.

The word "theology" is derived from two words: *theos* meaning God and *logos* meaning reason or expression. Hence, theology is a rational or reasonable discussion about God (Geisler, 2011). The word theology can also be defined as the rational interpretation of the Christian faith. Theology is to think about God and to express those thoughts in certain ways. Erickson (1998) has defined theology as the discipline or study that "strives to give a coherent statement of the doctrines of the Christian faith, based primarily on the Scriptures, placed in the context of culture in general, worded in a contemporary idiom, and related to issues in life" (p. 70). However, Grudem (1994) defines systematic theology as "any study that answers the question, 'What does the whole Bible teach us today?' about any given topic" (p. 21). According to this definition, systematic theology is an attempt to gather and find meaning in life's various issues and topics through the lens of the Bible, the Word of God.

What is psychology? It is defined by Myers (2007) as "the scientific study of behavior and mental processes" (p. 2). Scipione, Crab, and Payne (2005) describe psychology as the study of humans' thinking, behavior, and emotions, and how they interrelate. Powlison (2000) defines it as the functions of the human soul itself, and "the functional aspects of your life—as well as the various dynamics and interrelationships existing within the whole" (p. 198). Psychology is considered the study of how living creatures interact with their environment and each other, and how they cope successfully or unsuccessfully with that environment. In other words, psychology is the study of how people live, why they do what they do, and what can be done to help them live better.

What then is the integration of psychology and theology? Entwistle (2010) regards it as different ways of understanding the salient truths about the nature and function of man through the explanations of various disciplines or perspectives in psychology and theology. Jones (cited in Johnson, 2010) describes it as "living out of the lordship of Christ over all of existence by giving his special revelation—God's true Word—its appropriate of authority in determining our fundamental beliefs about and practices toward all of reality" (p. 115). Carter and Narramore (1979) view it as the relationship between faith and learning or the relationship between the discoveries of psychology and what is revealed in the Bible.

Simply put, integration of psychology and theology is the relationship between what is revealed through nature (psychology) and what is revealed through the Word of God (theology). Roberts (cited in Johnson & Jones, 2000) defines it as way or process whereby "elements of psychologies and a Christian system of thought and practice are adapted to one another to form a somewhat new system of Christian thought and practice;

the resulting system can also be called integration" (p. 138). Therefore, the goal of integration is to resolve the conflicts or bridge the gaps that exist between the facts of the Bible and the various approaches of psychology, as well as the facts of psychology and wrong interpretation of the Bible.

Historical Synopsis of Integration

The battle over the amalgamation or integration of psychology and theology has been waged for ages. Entwistle (2010) provides some historical synopsis of how Christian religion and faith have been in constant feud with certain scientific discoveries and rationales. For instance, Copernicus and Galileo's heliocentric theory of a solar system in which the sun and not the earth was the center of the universe was rejected and banned by the church. This was possible because at that time the church was regarded as the supreme custodian of knowledge. It explains why most of the post-apostolic church fathers and theologians emphasized the primacy of faith over reason. They assumed that faith came from God's revelation, whereas science and philosophy came from fallen human nature (Entwistle, 2010). For instance, despite his Platonic background, Augustine of Hippo emphasized the superiority of faith over reason in his two books, *The City of God* and *The City of Humanity*.

The Roman Catholic Church borrowed from philosophy to construct some of its theology and dogma. Therefore, throughout the period of the Middle Ages the church was considered to be the source of knowledge, whereas philosophy and pursuits were mere servants of theology. No wonder Aquinas (cited in Entwistle, 2010) said, "[Theology] surpasses other speculative sciences … because other sciences derive their certitude from natural light of human reason, which can err; whereas [theology] derives

its certitude from the light of divine knowledge, which cannot be misled" (p. 22). However, during the Middle Ages many Christian scholars and theologians wrote books on issues related to psychology and soul care (Johnson, 2010). With the rise of Scholasticism during the medieval era, the gap between theology and philosophy began to close; nevertheless, the church was considered authoritative when it came to making any final decision.

Even though the church placed faith above reason and theology above all sciences, Christianity paved the way for the emergence of science in the seventeenth century. Whitehead (1958) observes that most of the founding fathers of modern science were Christians; for instance, Copernicus, Galileo, Bacon, Kepler, and Newton. Christianity provided the worldview upon which scientific reasoning is built. Protestants favored science because they believed that the entire world manifests the glory of God. Evangelicals initially regarded science as a partner in the understanding of natural theology; however, with the emergence of Darwinism, they began to see science as a danger to faith. Therefore, the responses of Evangelicals to psychology today are varied. Fundamentalists and conservatives reject psychology, but others who favor social action, intellectualism, and ecumenism are more open to psychology.

The pro-integration group among the Evangelicals was responsible for the introduction of American Psychological Association (APA) programs that integrate psychology and theology. The Journal of Psychology and Theology and the Journal of Psychology and Christianity are products of this amalgamation. Notable names among the integrationists are Clyde Narramore, James Dobson, Gary Collins, Bruce Narramore, and Larry Crabb. However, the anti-psychology and anti-integration movement also

emerged among the Evangelicals and the chief supporter among them is Jay Adams (Johnson, 2010; Entwistle, 2010). Therefore, the case for integration of psychology and theology has become a pros and cons issue today, with various models as well as theories of integration.

Need for Integration

The relationship between psychology and theology has been characterized by a certain degree of antagonism and controversy. Tension has existed between he professionals in the two disciplines. For instance, theologians accuse psychologists of being speculative and objective, as well as harboring antipathy toward religion or faith. On the other hand, psychologists taunt theologians as too superstitious, supernatural, subjective, and fanatical.

As the Church began to grow, so did its commitment to meeting the pastoral and physical as well as the spiritual and psychological needs of its members and their communities. Furthermore, as individual lives, marriages, and relationships crumble, people seek help. Many turn to mental health practitioners for help, whereas others turn to the church. To this end, Christians entering the field of mental health, psychology, and counseling have demonstrated great interest in taking their faith with them. However, the major contention among them is this: How do psychology and theology relate to one another? Christian practitioners in the field of psychotherapy have taken this question seriously enough to formulate various models of integration that might inform this interaction. Christians who provide psychotherapy often express a genuine desire to honor Christ in their work and to pursue their psychological and psychotherapeutic tasks with biblical integrity and theological faithfulness.

Carl Jung and Paul Tillich offer structural correlations between psychology and theology. Jung (1958) argues for connections between psychology and theology by demonstrating that the religious impulse is innate, that it is part of the structure of the psyche, and as such must be expressed. He further claims that "the only antidote to the tyranny of conformism and the subsequent alienation and neuroticization of modern man is the renewal of the religious attitude" (p. 46). Even though Jung's psychology does not favor Christian religion, he strove to articulate a theology that is more open to religious phenomena and their doctrinal expression. Instead of undermining the openness of his psychology, he felt his proposed restructuring of Christianity made it more responsive to the needs of modem man and deepened the relationship between psychological and theological thought.

Paul Tillich, on the other hand, regards psychology as a great asset to theology. According to Tillich, psychology provides new insight into the nature of the self, stands as an ally with theology in the fight against the dehumanizing effects of modern society, and provides a heightened sense of sin as the universal estrangement of human beings from their essential nature (Tillich, 1988). He (1982) further argues that he "did not think it is possible today to elaborate a Christian doctrine of man, and especially a Christian doctrine of the Christian man, without using the immense material brought forth by depth psychology" (p. 19). However, he does not embrace psychology without reservation. He argues that psychology is incapable of differentiating between existential and pathological anxiety. Psychology, in his argument, can only pose the questions of human existence and cannot provide answers to these questions. Dourley (1981) observes that the points of similarity and integration being advocated by Carl Jung and Paul Tillich

"could be of great importance in the deepening and revitalization of both psychology and theology, by showing practitioners of each discipline the points of interconnection" (p. 27).

John Calvin began his *Institutes* by stating that "true and solid wisdom consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves" (p. 53). The Reformed worldview, following in this Calvinistic tradition, saw a correlation between theology and science. Theology was regarded as systematic inquiry into Scripture and science as systematic inquiry into creation. Both were viewed as dealing with God's revelation to humankind. The latter investigates God's general revelation, whereas the former examines God's special revelation. Even though John Calvin and other reformers upheld the principle of *Sola Scriptura*, they did not support the concept of *Nuda Scriptura*, that the Scriptures alone—with no fences, guidance, or traditions—are authoritative. Hence, they subscribed to the axiom that all truth is God's truth. In other words, Scripture is above all other sources of truth, but Scripture alone is not a source for truth.

Calvin and other reformers advocated for eclecticism and integration of knowledge, reason, and psychology with faith and theology. This is necessary because just as the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament and the New is concealed in the Old, so knowledge and reason (psychology) are hidden in faith and revelation (theology), and revelation (theology) is revealed through reason (psychology). Collins (1977) has also observed,

> The proposed new foundation is built on the premise that God has revealed
>
> himself through a natural world, discoverable by science, and through the Bible,

interpreted by hermeneutics and understood by theology … the findings of

psychology and theology … should not be in contradiction since they are two

perspectives on the same body of truth. (p. 169)

Another advantage to the integration of psychology and theology is that it can

make counseling and psychotherapy a holistic experience. According to Larson (1991),

the goal of counseling is to provide better adjustment, coping ability, or symptom

reduction. It also aims to provide behavioral change and empower the client to do that

which he could not do before (Lewis, 1970). However, McMinn (1996) observes that the

purpose of Christian counseling is to enhance both the spiritual and the mental wellbeing

of clients. Because human problems are not only physical and spiritual but also social,

psychological, biological, and teleological in nature, a need exists to provide therapeutic

interventions that holistically address the needs of the individual. Such holistic

counseling is only possible through the integration of psychology and theology. As noted

by McMinn and Campbell (2007), the best way to provide care for souls is to apply the

truth from psychology and theology.

Integration of psychology and theology can also play complementary rather than

completing or competing roles in counseling and psychotherapy. Carter and Narramore

(1979) provide the complementary focus of psychology and theology as follows: "The

locus of explanation is different in theology and psychology. In theology, the locus of

explanation is generally historical and sociocultural, whereas in psychology it is

descriptive (clinical), developmental, and experimental" (p. 52). They further observe

that the epistemology of theology centers on revelation, whereas the epistemology of

psychology is based on empiricism.

Commenting on their complementary use, Entwistle (2010) observes: "Christian theology always provides a context from which our psychological understanding will proceed, even though psychology sometimes supplies details that are not conveyed by theology" (p. 233). However, the primacy of the Bible (upon which theology rests) over psychology cannot be downplayed. As Jung (1976) notes, "We must read the Bible or we shall not understand psychology. Our psychology, whole lives, our language and imagery are built upon the Bible" (p. 156).

Models of Integration

Throughout church history, including the period of the church fathers, numerous views on how to integrate theology and Christian faith with psychology and counseling have emerged. This section examines different forms of and approaches to integration of theology and psychology. Richard Niebuhr laid the foundation upon which John Carter and Bruce Narramore constructed their models of integration. Niebuhr (2001) provided five models for how to integrate Christianity with culture. Faith in Christ, according to Niebuhr, should go beyond separation (Christ against culture), accommodation (Christ of culture), adoration (Christ above culture), corporation (Christ and culture in paradox), and transformation (Christ the transformer of culture) that dynamically engages the culture with the values that Christ espoused. Based on this, Carter and Narramore (1979) developed their four models of integration: Against, Of, Parallels, and Integrates. Crabb (1997) revised these models and developed his own four which he termed Separate but Equal, Tossed Salad, Nothing Buttery, and Spoiling the Egyptians.

Johnson and Jones (2010) recently provided some approaches to integration, using different terminology. The principal purpose of their book, as noted by its editors,

is to explore the five major positions currently taken by evangelicals regarding the relationship between psychology and theology (Johnson & Jones, 2010). Their five views or models of integration are A Levels-of-Explanation View, An Integration View, A Christian Psychology View, A Transformational Psychology View, and A Biblical Counseling View. Entwistle (2010) developed other models of integration he called Enemies Model, Spies Model, Colonialists Model, Neutral Parties Model, and Allies. The following subsection summarizes the various integration models proposed by Carter and Narramore (1979), Crabb (1997), Johnson and Jones (2010), and Entwistle (2010). The models are arranged in the order of their similarity to and agreement with one another. However, Carter and Narramore's (1979) four models serve as the paradigm for the explanation of these models.

The Against Model argues that psychology and theology are not related and should never be integrated. Those who subscribe to this model maintain that the foundations and teachings of the two disciplines are antithetical to one another. Crabb (1997) calls this model Nothing Buttery. Its major premise is summarized as "Nothing But Grace, Nothing But Christ, Nothing But Faith, Nothing But the Word" (Adams, 1997, p. 40). This model maintains that everything that needs to be known is in the Bible and that problems are caused by sin and can only be solved through what God says about sin in the Bible. Johnson and Jones (2010) call this approach A Biblical Counseling View. In their opinion this model stipulates that counseling should be based exclusively on a biblical theology because sin is the major cause of human problems and the gospel is the primary solution.

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The Bible as Scripture is considered authoritative and necessary for Christian counseling because it is regarded as God's soul care guidebook. Hence, the assumption is that the Bible is vicariously sufficient because its content exclusively and inclusively addresses all counseling issues. This model is called the Enemies Model by Entwistle (2010). According to this model, psychology and theology "are adversaries that have always been in skirmish, and never far from an all-out war. They are sworn enemies, and the adversary must be vigorously attacked to protect the truth" (Entwistle, 2010, p. 136). Two types of Enemies Model or Against Model are identified—Secular Combatants and Christian Combatants (Entwistle, 2010). The former are those in the field of psychology who hold to beliefs that are against religious or Christian tenets. The latter are Christians and theologians who totally reject all forms of human reason. The major proponents of Against Model are Jay Adams and Martin and Deidre Bobgan.

Adams (1979) argues there are two sources of counsel. Based on the story of the fall when Adam and Eve were given a specific command from God and then tempted to follow Satan's "counsel" which confused, distorted, and stood against God's counsel, he claims that because there is no neutral counsel, psychology must be regarded as Satan's counsel. Furthermore, Adams (1970) totally rejects any form of amalgamation or connection between psychology and theology. In his opinion, "The sort of eclecticism by which one assumes that he can adopt techniques that grow out of non-biblical principles that rest upon non-Christian presuppositions has done much damage to Christian counseling" (p. 100). Adams further warns, "Rogerianism, therefore, must be rejected *in toto*. Every remnant of this humanistic system exalting man as autonomous must be eradicated" (p. 103).

Bobgan and Bobgan (1987) describe psychology as being "according to the tradition of men" (p. 4). They question whether psychology contains more confusion than truth. However, they seem to have resolved to "throw the baby out with the bathwater" by arguing that we should reject psychology altogether. They quote Kilpatrick (cited in Bobgan & Bobgan, 1987) in their rebuttal of psychology by saying, "what psychology gives with one hand, it takes away with the other" (p. 113). The major tenet of The Against Model is that psychology and theology can never mix and cannot be integrated.

The Of Model for the integration of psychology and theology stipulates that the true meaning of Scripture is found in its psychology and not in its theology. It elevates science above the authority of the Bible by rejecting the supernatural aspects of religion and taking a naturalistic approach to religion. This model of integration tends to appeal to those with a more liberal theology. It focuses on demythologizing the text of the Bible to make it more scientific. As observed by Carter and Narramore (1979), the advocates of this model "selectively translate or interpret various passages or concepts from the Bible for use in their particular psychology. Certain aspects of the Bible are mapped into the writings of some school of psychology or translated into a particular theoretical system" (p. 85), and the end result is the "Christianized version of some psychological theorist" (p. 85). This model is termed Tossed Salad by Crabb (1997), A Christian Psychology View by Jones and Johnson (2010), and Spies Model by Entwistle (2010).

According to Crabb's Tossed Salad model, this form of integration mixes biblical truths with psychological speculations and makes use of biblical ideas to analyze psychological reasoning. Crabb (1997) suggests that this approach is like a salad in which a variety of ingredients are thrown into the bowl and tossed about. Jones and Johnson

(2010) observe in their version of this model, namely, A Christian Psychology View, that this method seeks to integrate modern/postmodern psychology with liberal theology. The proponents of this model of integration seek to reread and interpret the Bible in light of the work of certain past great Christian psychologists such as Augustine, Aquinas, Pascal, and Kierkegaard (Jones & Johnson, 2010). Furthermore, Entwistle (2010) in the Spies Model, argues that adherents of this model are "interested in appropriating the benefits of religious belief and practice for psychological well-being" (p. 182). In other words, they place emphasis on the psychological aspects of religious teachings. As a result, religion then "becomes a vehicle for the expression of psychological truth" (Carter & Narramore, 1979, p. 82). However, Entwistle (2010) classifies the Spies Model into two; namely, Foreign Spies and Domestic Spies. The former refers to psychologists who use and borrow biblical or religious symbols to enhance psychological benefits, whereas the latter are liberal theologians who reject any supernatural forms in Christianity and utilize humanistic and naturalistic approaches to religion. The chief representatives of this model in the foreign or psychological camp are Carl Jung and Erick Fromm; representatives of the domestic or theological field are Norman Vincent Peale, Down Browning, and Howard Clinebell.

The Parallels Model of integration states that psychology and theology are separate and do not overlap. That is to say, both are affirmed, but they are isolated from one another. This also means it is possible to align the concepts of both, but each concept is only valid in its discipline. The same truth is expressed in both disciplines but in different ways. Carter and Narramore (1979) identify two versions of the parallel model: the isolation version and the correlation version. The holders of the isolation version

argue that psychology and the Bible are different and not related. However, the correlation version seeks "to correlate or align certain psychological and spiritual concepts" (p. 92).

Crabb's version, Separate but Equal states that the Bible only deals with issues that are spiritual and theological in nature, such as Christian doctrines and ways of life. Other issues that are pathological, biological, and psychological in nature should be handled by those trained in such areas (Crabb, 1997). The assumption of this argument is that the focus of the two disciplines, psychology and theology, is not the same and that each is unique in its own way. Furthermore, Jones and Johnson (2010) in their version, A Levels-of-Explanation View, argue that humans are best understood in terms of a hierarchy of levels or disciplines of relative complexity that should not be confused. Hence, one's faith should not affect the other levels or disciplines. Regarding the question of whether psychology and theology are separate but equal, Jones and Johnson (2010) comment:

> A humble faith in God and awareness of human fallibility motivates rigorous, open-minded science … Psychological science supports much biblical and theological wisdom. Whether viewed through the lens of ancient biblical wisdom or modern psychological science, the story of human nature is much the same. An ever-reforming faith will always be open to learning from both the book of God's Word and the book of God's works. (pp. 49-50)

Entwistle (2010) has developed two versions for the parallel model—The Colonialist Model and The Neutral Parties Model. In his view, those who hold to the Colonialist Model see value in psychological ideas and selectively take what will meet

their needs without buying into the underlying value of psychology as a discipline. In this model, psychology is subservient to theology and the book of God's Word is placed above the book of God's Works. According to Entwistle (2010), this colonialist idea has influenced the new or modern Nouthetic counseling movement. Many followers of Jay Adams have redefined their positions toward psychology. For instance, Welch and Powlison (1997) observe: "Nouthetic counseling is not opposed to the use of psychological data, especially when it is used to illustrate and describe rather than explain" (p. 303). Even though the colonialists may respect some psychological truths, nevertheless, their loyalty is to the Bible or theology (Entwistle, 2010). On the other hand, the adherents of The Neutral Parties Model attempt to explore the ideas of both psychology and theology without trying to see how they relate to each other. The principal emphasis of this model is that psychology and theology may teach the same things, but they are not the same (Entwistle, 2010).

Fredrick Thorne and Gordon Allport have been identified as examples of the secular exponents of the parallel model (Carter & Narramore, 1979; Entwistle, 2010). For instance, Thorne argues that counseling that is scientifically grounded is different from counseling that is religiously influenced (Carter & Narramore, 1979). Furthermore, Allport (cited in Carter & Narramore, 1979) also observes that psychology and theology are saying the same things, but using different ways to convey them. Hence, what we need is translation and not integration. The spiritual or theological exponents of this model are Paul Clement, Clyde Narramore, David Meyers, and Malcolm Jeeves (Carter & Narramore, 1979; Entwistle, 2010). Above all, the parallel model takes a dichotomic and dualistic stance on theology and psychology by seeing theology as relevant for

Sunday and psychology as relevant for the rest of the week. In other words, theology is considered to be applicable to spiritual life, whereas psychology is relevant to psychological life.

The Integrates Model argues that no visible division or disagreement exists between the secular (psychology) and sacred (theology) (Carter & Narramore, 1979). The basic assumption of this model can be summarized by the axiom 'All truth is God's truth'. The loci of this statement can clearly be derived from the doctrine of creation and the doctrine of the unity of God. God as creator is the author of all truth in the world and the unity of God means that there is nothing contradictory in God. Carter and Narramore (1979) observe, "A basic unity of all truth, whether found in scriptural revelation or scientific experimentation. Given this unity of truth, it is possible to integrate truth derived from different sources and with different methodologies" (p. 64). Entwistle (2010) observes that reason, revelation, and scientific method are all authentic means of searching for truth in the world God has created. Integration involves discovery of the already existing "fundamental unity of the world God created" (p. 19).

The Integrates Model argues that psychology and theology are allies and friendly. Carter and Narramore (1979) explain the relevance of psychology to theology and integration in the following words, "When God created humanity, He created the possibility for psychology … Psychology here is the psychology that existed before the word was coined, while Psychology in the other three models refers to a theory or a system" (p. 104). Larry Crabb developed the concept of Spoiling the Egyptians in reference to the way the Israelites left Egypt as well as how they took material possessions from the Egyptians to illustrate this model. Crabb (1997) uses this story to

argue for the possibility of taking or borrowing from psychology and socials sciences whatever truth we find that can be used in theology, just as the Israelites took from the Egyptians. Hindson and Eyrich (2004), in opposing Crabb's metaphorical or allegorical interpretation and application of the passage, argue as follows:

> No doubt this writer intended to simply use this figure of speech in an allegorical sense. However, the allegory fails to do justice to the clear meaning of the biblical text from which the concept is taken. In the biblical text (Exodus 12:35-36), this spoiling of the Egyptians was clearly a matter of borrowing material things, not sociocultural concepts. In fact, when the Israelites did borrow such concepts they build a golden calf and an idol, and God punished them for it. (p. 20)

Jones and Johnson (2010) termed this model An Integration View. This approach affirms that God is glorified when Christians make use of His truth. Hence the basic assumption of the integrationist, according to Jones (cited in Jones & Johnson, 2010) is that although Scripture determines the fundamental beliefs and practices of Christians, however,

> Scripture does not provide all that we need in order to understand human beings fully, and that there is a legitimate and strategic role for psychology as a science and as a profession in giving us intellectual and practical tools for understanding and improving the human condition. (pp. 101-102)

Therefore, this model takes science and research seriously, and reinterprets psychology in light of Christian faith.

Entwistle (2010) calls this approach The Allies Model. This model regards Christianity and psychology as two complementary methods for discovering truth. It

further serves to properly integrate the two by the proper admixture of the book of God's works and the book of God's Word, each operating under God's sovereignty. The principal focus of the Allies Model is the sovereignty of God. Regarding this, Entwistle (2010) commented:

> The Allies Model begins with the assertion that God's sovereignty reigns over all of life. Theology, psychology, and all other areas of inquiry are *subjects of One Sovereign* … Because God has granted us these subjects, they can work together as *allies.* (p. 207)

Entwistle regards all professionals in the field of psychology and theology as tenants who are making use of their peculiar and relevant educational skills to discover God's truth. Furthermore, in an attempt to juxtapose psychology and theology, Entwistle (2010) observes:

> Theological reflection typically focuses on *God's workings in the world*. It tells us the story of God's involvement with the world in creation and redemption. Psychological reflection typically focuses more on the *workings of God's world*. It helps us understand the mechanisms through which much of human behavior is mediated. When we move into the realm of psychotherapy, though, we enact our beliefs about how things should be … We should expect to find parallels between psychology and theology because they have a common Author and describe a single reality, but integration is about far more than simply identifying parallels between psychology and theology. Although psychology and theology require some degree of independence, the two cannot be completely severed from one another. (p. 208)

The Integrates Model is the approach embraced by some Evangelicals such as Bruce Narramore, Mark McMinn, Stan Jones, Everett Worthington, and Garry Collins. They hold to the following statement by George MacDonald: "Truth is truth whether it is spoken by the lips of Jesus or Balaam's donkey" (cited in Entwistle, 2010, p. 224). This is the model that this writer considers more appropriate. It is the view adopted by our Lord Jesus Christ when He informed His disciples that He did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it. It is the view He adopted when He advised them to render unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God (Matthew 22:21). Jesus believed that something good exists and can be applicable from the old dispensation in the new dispensation. According to Him, the Old interprets the New and the New interprets Old just as psychology and theology interrelate and interpret one another.

The Transformational Psychology View is an additional approach set forth by Jones and Johnson (2010). This model was developed and constructed by Coe and Hall (cited in Jones & Johnson, 2010), and focuses on a "spiritual formation approach to psychology and Christianity" (p. 200). It is a model that seeks to relate psychology to faith, based on the spiritual and emotional transformation of the psychologist or counselor. Hence, the primary focus of this model is the person providing the psychotherapy—the counselor or psychologist. Commenting on this, Jones and Johnson (2010) observed:

> [I]t turns out that the *spiritual-emotional development of the psychologist is foundational* to the process of arriving at deep truths about human nature (the conceptual product), and to doing this in the Spirit as an act of worship for the sake of the love of God, which is the final end of life (the embodied product).

Thus, this transformational model affirms that the transformation of the

psychologist is the determinative and foundational element for the process and

product of doing psychology. (pp. 205-206)

It is after the therapist has experienced spiritual transformation that he or she can provide

clients with counseling that is aimed at spiritual direction and spiritual formation. The

thesis of transformational psychology is that Christian life is relational—to have

relationship with man and God—and transformational. Coe and Hall (cited in Jones &

Johnson, 2010) observe,

We do psychology well to the degree that the psychologist is more and more

transformed by and open to the Spirit in the act of knowing and doing psychology

– for the end of all actions, including doing psychology, is love of neighbor and

ultimately the love of God. (p. 214)

Corroborating this thesis, Adams (1977) suggests that the basic purpose for solving

personal problems is to have a strong and deeper relationship with God and to please Him

through worship and service. Hence, "The Christian counselor's work is to function as an

instrument through which the Holy Spirit enlightens minds regarding the truth of

significance and security in Christ" (p. 182).

Collins' version of the model of transformational psychology is called

Discipleship Counseling. He summarizes the goal of discipleship counseling as follows:

"helping of counselees to function effectively in the society in which they live, to be at

peace with themselves, to be in communion with God, and to be actively involved in

becoming disciples of and disciplers for Jesus Christ" (Collins, 1977, p. 187). He argues

for the need for transformational counseling in the following words:

Human beings cannot really be at peace with the world and with themselves until they have established personal relationship with God. It is then that a person becomes a new creation who is able to actualize his or her complete potential, find purpose in existence, and fully develop God-given gifts and abilities. (p. 187)

The Modalities of Integration

It has been observed that after they agree and accept the integration of psychology and theology, it is possible for people to begin to use psychology in a way that undermines the spiritual value of theology (Hindson and Eyrich, 2004). That is, it is easy to be become engrossed in psychology and begin to assess and classify people from a psychological point of view alone at the exclusion of the biblical. Therefore in this section the writer will explain ways and methods to integrate theology and psychology to achieve desired result.

True integration draws truth from both disciplines and seeks a holistic view of truth. In other words, integration requires a holistic approach to psychology and theology. As observed by Collins (1986):

No problem is strictly psychological or social, purely physical, or "simply spiritual." When something goes wrong with one part of a unified person, the individual's whole being is affected. A doctor may specialize in treating some part of the body such as ear, nose, and throat, or urinary tract; he may have expertise in dealing with some specialized psychological problem like schizophrenia or learning disabilities; he may be a pastoral counselor whose main interest is with spiritual healing. But all counselors must remember that there is no sharp line between the spiritual, the social, the emotional-cognitive-behavioral-

psychological, and the physical person. One or two symptoms may predominate and cry for help, but at such a time the entire body is off balance. *Our helping will be more effective if we do not lose sight of the holistic nature of man.* (italics for emphasis, p. 184)

Integration must begin with the integrationist. In other words, integration of the concept is impossible without the integration of the person. As noted by Carter and Narramore (1979),

> unless we as persons are open to the impact of a relationship with God in our lives and unless we are open to seeing our own maladaptive ways of coping, we will find it necessary to shut ourselves off from certain sources of truth and block any real progress in integration … this is perhaps the biggest single barrier to integration. (p. 117)

Integration will require the integrationist to get out of the Jacuzzi of exclusivism, egocentrism, and particularism and instead "begin to develop a truly integrative way of looking at things" (p. 118). This will require humility and realization of one's finiteness and fallibility. It is this humble attitude that will help those who are involved in integration to be open to the opinion of others as well as other disciplines. Jones and Johnson (2010) observe that due to the finite nature of humanity as well as the result of sin, no human being can have perfect or absolute understanding of things. Hence, "Developing a more comprehensive, fuller, richer understanding is not easy; it requires great effort. It also requires virtues like humility … Wise people 'begin' their search for wisdom with the awareness that they lack it. They need the help of God and others" (p. 294).

Integration will require openness to both new ideas and alternative truths. Carter and Narramore (1979) advised that integrationists must seek to consider any optional views and not be too hasty in rejecting contrary ideas. They must be able "to hold seeming conflicts in abeyance or in tension until a broader perspective or a new way of looking at things brings resolution" (p. 119). Entwistle (2010) observes that psychology and theology are allies because their root and source are from the same Lord, the Almighty. In his opinion, God gave birth to the subject of psychology when He created human beings and also laid the foundations of theology when He gave us His word. Because both psychology and theology are His subjects—the book of His works and the book of His words respectively—they reflect truths about Him and the world. Hence, integrationists need to open their minds and horizons to the truths of the two (psychology and theology). Beck (2001) argues:

> The potential benefits of cross-fertilization between the two fields are immense. Just as advances in historical, archaeological, and linguistic studies have greatly enriched our understanding of the text of Scripture, so can informed psychological understanding deepen our understanding of how the truths of Scripture relate to the human condition. The discipline of psychology desperately needs the salt and light that trained Christian practitioners can provide for it. Christians can make a difference. (p. 18)

Integration needs to be consistent with the principle of *Sola Scriptura,* which says that the Bible is sole infallible authority and only source of revelation needed for Christian faith and practice. However, *Sola Scriptura* does not rule out the possibility of psychological science, but only emphasizes the fact that Scripture remains the final

authoritative norm. In other words, other sources of truth can be authoritative only if they are regarded as subordinate to Scripture as the final authority. Reason and empiricism can be sources of knowledge and truth but must not contradict the *sola scriptura* principle.

The doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* stipulates that Scripture is sufficient as the sole source of authority for divine revelation towards justification and for understanding the goals and process of sanctification. Nevertheless, it does allow for other authorities, subordinate to it like psychology that may provide useful insight into life which in turn may give more insight into the process of sanctification as well. Collins (1988) observes that psychology is a God-given field of knowledge enabling us to more adequately help people who live in a society permeated with degrees of change and complexity unknown in the days of Jesus and Paul. Hence, integration must be coherent with the counsel of God by adhering to the *sola scriptura* principle.

The final and another important element of good integration is maturity. As noted by Roberts (cited in Johnson & Jones, 2000), "Integration is problematic not because it absolutely cannot be done but because the snares and pitfalls awaiting those who try it are so insidious" (p. 238). Therefore, integration needs to be undertaken in such a way that it recognizes the pitfalls, the limitations, and the steps which can trip one up. A mature integration acknowledges the methodological limitations of the disciplines it is trying to integrate. In other words, the limitations of the scientific method used in psychology and/or the limitations of what knowledge can be achieved by the theological method must be understood. Mature integration will require a good education in psychology in addition to a good knowledge of theology. Any attempt at integration will be futile if we

are ignorant about Christian tradition and theology, or if we are ignorant about the nature and findings of psychology.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined the meaning, necessity, history, types, and modalities of integration. We have seen that the integration of theology and psychology is possible if it is done with maturity. We have also noted that the use of psychology is not a simple task; we may fall into many pitfalls, snares, and difficulties if we are not careful. However, we need to be aware of the limitations of both psychology and theology. Theological truth does place boundaries on our use of psychology and our psychological thinking. Therefore, integration of psychology and theology needs to be done with care and humility, always allowing our conclusions to be challenged and changed when necessary. The next chapter will discuss perspectives on assessment and diagnosis.

CHAPTER 4

PERSPECTIVES ON ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSIS

Assessment and diagnosis are essential in counseling. They are the navigational

systems that provide direction and guidance to therapists in their provision of care and

help to clients. The therapeutic process may be likened to a journey through the

unknown. In order to arrive at a known destination, there must be a clear direction and

navigation. This is where assessment and diagnosis enter the process. Although the two

are juxtaposed and used interchangeably, they have different connotations. Assessment

and diagnosis are the hypothetical and theoretical loci for constructing psychopathology.

This chapter examines the meaning of and differences between assessment and

diagnosis through the psychological and theological-pastoral lenses. It discusses the use

and application of assessment and diagnosis in psychopathology based on the

psychological, biological, socio-cultural, and spiritual domains. An integrative model of

psychopathology that will be useful in pastoral and marital counseling will be set forth.

Conceptual Definitions

The word "examine" is used twenty-nine times in the thirteenth and fourteenth

chapters of Leviticus. In nearly all of these twenty-nine verses it is part of the expression,

"The priest is to examine" (Leviticus 13:3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 17, 20; 14:3, 44, etc.). The

Hebrew word *wǝ-rā-'āh* translated "examine" means "to look at" or "to look through." In

Leviticus 13 and 14, the Hebrew priests served as physicians responsible for carrying out

the assessment and diagnosis of leprosy and dermatologic-related illnesses. In this sense,

the priests served as public health officers by assessing and diagnosing disease making

use of carefully defined criteria spelled out by God, not by following intuition or

guessing. They provided a medical examination in the form of assessment and diagnosis before offering care or treatment for patients.

Assessment is the process a therapist must go through in order to arrive at a diagnosis. It may involve an interview, or it may involve any of a number of psychological tests and inventories. Assessment may also include such elements as intelligence tests, aptitude tests, and personality inventories. Once assessment is completed, a diagnosis is given. Assessment in psychotherapy or pastoral counseling provides the counselor with information needed to understand the client. It is the means of knowing and ascertaining each client's uniqueness. It is a way of telling them that they are very special and the counselor really wants to know them and to understand the reason why they are what they are (Seligman, 1986). In other words, assessment is the means by which counselor and client work together in order to develop a therapeutic relationship.

Assessment can be further described as a process that is very important in counseling. It helps to provide therapists with a more accurate examination and knowledge of client issues, to create case conceptualizations, to select effective clinically proven therapies, and to evaluate process. Furthermore, assessment can provide the data needed for present and ongoing evaluation with minimal personal bias, and necessary information for effective interventions. It helps therapists to judge their own effectiveness and how the intervention provided will affect the client. Assessment also serves as a therapeutic process whereby objective information for the client's self-discovery and self-reflection are realized, and which are valuable for enhancing psychological health. In the words of Maxmen and Ward (1995), "Assessment may be defined as a time limited,

formal process that collects clinical information from many sources in order to reach a diagnosis, to make a prognosis, to render a biopsychosocial formulation, and to determine treatment" (p. 19). From this definition, one can deduce that assessment is not therapy; it is clearly different. It is the prelude to therapy. It is the means of collecting and arranging information about the client for the sake of intervention.

Diagnosis, on the other hand, means to know the clients from both internal and external perspectives. Often the word "diagnosis" is associated with the medical act of identifying illnesses or symptoms. However, the word has more functional meanings than just its medical connotation. "Diagnosis" comes from the combination of the Greek words *dia* meaning "through, apart, or by means of" and *gnosis,* which means "knowledge" or "to know." Therefore diagnosis is to know apart or to demarcate between. In a medical sense, it is to know the difference between one disease and another or to determine the nature of a disease.

Diagnosis is the means of interpreting as well as constructing the labeling of a reality. It provides therapists, counselors, and mental health workers with a unified classification of clients' problems in order to ascertain the needed interventions. Diagnosis is the means by which mental health workers classify their clients in order to determine the help they need. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders is the working manual and handbook for diagnostic labeling and categorizing of mental health problems to be treated by mental health professionals (nosology). Therefore, the chief aims of diagnosis and diagnostic classification are to provide a common language and means of communication among mental health professionals, a paradigm for

describing each client, a method of arranging and sourcing information about clients, and a means of forecasting the modality and result of a problem.

For synthetic analysis, one can hypothesize that diagnosis is the result of an assessment because there cannot be any diagnosis unless assessment has been done. Good diagnosis can sometimes lead to more assessment. The psychological assessment is a structured interview used by a counselor to gather information from a client in order to evaluate their mental health complaint. The assessment helps to establish either a tentative or definitive diagnosis. The information gathered through assessment is what the counselor or therapist uses to inform the client about the results and identify treatments to administer. Assessment is the conceptualization and information about the problem; diagnosis is the identification of the problem's symptoms, signs, and degrees of maladjustment.

Some Theoretical Perspectives

The goal of every therapeutic relationship is to "facilitate an accurate and comprehensive evaluation of the problem(s) and the resources available to 'cure' or manage it properly and devise an effective treatment plan that the client can understand, own, and do" (Clinton & Hawkins, 2011, p. 95). Assessment provides the counselor with an accurate understanding of the client and the problem, whereas diagnosis helps to determine the clinical nature as well as the treatment of the problem. To accomplish this, especially to provide necessary treatment and intervention plans, a therapist needs to investigate or explore the causation of the presenting problems. This is where psychopathology enters the therapeutic process by providing the loci for assessment and diagnosis.

The cosmological argument as constructed and developed by Plato and Aristotle is a philosophical theory that invokes concern for some full, complete, ultimate, or best explanation of what exists contingently. It also raises intrinsically important philosophical questions about contingency and necessity, causation and explanation. This argument claims that everything that exists or occurs must have had a cause. One can borrow from the cosmological argument the idea that every mental disorder, personality disorder, abnormal behavior, dysfunctional behavior, or "crisis in living" must have a foundational cause. The assumption is that things cannot just happen and that there must be a cause for every abnormality in behavior. What are the causes of personality and mental disorders as well as abnormal behaviors in marital relationships? Why are people what they are? Various explanations, reasons, and suggestions have been given as answers to these questions.

In the philosophical realm, causes are categorized in three ways: necessary, sufficient, and contributory. A necessary cause is one in which an event must lead to another event for that event to happen. A sufficient cause is one that is adequate by itself to cause something to happen. A contributory cause is one that elongates the propensity of the occurrence of a disorder (Millon, Grossman, Millon, Meagher, & Ramnath, 2004). However, in developmental pathogenesis of psychopathology, causes are classified in two ways: predisposing and precipitating factors. Predisposing factors are conditions that are not necessary and sufficient by themselves, but can contribute to the development of disorders. Examples include socioeconomic status, family structure, heredity, and learned behaviors. Precipitating factors, on the other hand, are events that happen before and trigger the manifestation of disorders. They are triggers for latent and hidden disorders.

Examples include loss of a parent, a serious accident, or an unexpected break in a relationship. Factors that cause personality and mental disorders are discussed in the following subsections.

The Psychosocial Perspective argues that mental illness or abnormal behavior is caused by one's personality makeup, happenings in the environment, and learned behavior. This model is favored by psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral, humanistic, and existential psychology (Yarhouse, Butman, & McRay, 2005). In his topographic model, Sigmund Freud hypothesized that the mind has different levels or layers: the conscious, the unconscious, and the preconscious. He believed that the majority of what we experience in our lives is not available to us at a conscious level. Everything of which we are aware is stored in our consciousness, but our consciousness makes up a very small part of who we are. He further argued that most of what drives us is buried in our unconscious and out of our awareness due to the extreme anxiety they cause. However, while buried there, these experiences continue to affect us tremendously. The preconscious or subconscious may be brought back into consciousness, but is not part of the active consciousness. Therefore, Freud concluded that efforts to bring relief to our unconscious impulse are the dominant influence on human behavior.

In his structural model, Freud developed the concept of the id (pleasure principle), the ego (reality principle), and the superego (morality principle). These three entities are believed to be at constant war with each other. The id always desires satisfaction; the ego seeks to meet the needs of the id while taking into consideration the reality of the situation. However, the superego serves as the moral agent that restrains and prevents the desires from being satisfied. Regarding this, Millon et al. (2004) observe: "Human beings

are said to exist in a state of perpetual conflict between the needs and constraints of various parts of the personality. We can endure, but cannot escape. Many of the personality disorders are in exactly this situation" (p. 24). For instance, avoidant personalities always desire close relations with others but are unable to secure or maintain them due to their inferiority complex and low self-esteem. Instead, they always retreat into their humiliating cubicles. Compulsive and negativistic personalities always experience conflict in matters that concern submitting and resisting authority. The compulsive personality exhibits this conflict by passively complying with the dictates of the superego. But the negativistic personality responds actively by modulating between submission and defiance.

Other psychosocial developmental models for the etiology of mental and personality disorders have been suggested. They include Freud's psychosexual development, Erickson's psychosocial development, and Bowlby's attachment theory. Maxmen and Ward (1995) argue that developmental stages or models intertwine with one another, and any problem at any phase may precipitate a psychopathological effect. For instance, a child who does not experience positive attachment and bonding with a caregiver or mother may develop insecurity, fear, anxiety and even depression. The other aspect of this perspective is the systemic or family system model, which postulates that the family is a complex unit; an indivisible and inseparable element. If anything happens to one member of the family, it will affect the others. In other words, what happens within the family may be the cause of mental disorder in a member of the family.

The Biological Perspective, also known as the medical model, argues that mental disorders are caused by any internal impairment, especially in the brain or nervous

system. The Greek physician Hippocrates believed that psychological disorders are biologically caused (Barlow & Durand, 2009). As noted by Yarhouse, Butman, and McRay (2005), "Nearly every major cluster of disorders has been linked with deficits or vulnerabilities in neuroanatomy, brain chemistry, genes or viral infections" (p. 44). The basic makeup of the nervous system includes the nerve cells, or neurons, that carry nerve (electrical) impulses throughout the brain and body. The human brain has about one trillion neurons, each consisting of: (1) the cell body containing the nucleus and other structures needed to keep the cell alive; (2) the dendrites that carry nerve impulses towards the cell body; and (3) the axon, a long branching process that carries impulses away from the cell body. Sensory cells receive information from external and internal stimuli and convert it into an electrical impulse that is transmitted from the sensory cells to the central nervous system (CNS; the spinal cord and brain) along nerve cells. When nerve impulses have travelled the length of the axon, they are faced with the difficulty of spanning a gap or the synapse over which electricity is unable to flow. These synapses must see to it that the impulses are not sent in an uncontrolled manner around the nervous system. So impulses cross synapses chemically rather than electrically. When an impulse arrives at the end of an axon, it triggers a chemical chain of events that ends with the release of packets of a chemical, the neurotransmitter, into the synapse. The neurotransmitter flows across the gap to dock with specialized proteins called receptors embedded in the membrane of the next neuron. The interaction between neurotransmitter and receptor converts the chemical message back into an electrical message. There are more than 50 neurotransmitters in the nervous system and many different types of receptors. Hence, because most of these receptors are affected by one specific type of

neurotransmitter, any variations in the receptor-neurotransmitter systems can be responsible for the manifestations of mental disorders such as schizophrenia and depression.

Psychoendocrinology, the study of the working relationships between the brain, hormones, and neurotransmitters, offers another biological explanation for the causes of mental disorders. It is based on the dynamics of interaction between the brain, hormones, and neurotransmitters. Maxmen and Ward (1995) explain this dynamism as follows:

The *hypothalamus* is located directly above the pituitary gland; considerable psychoendocrine activity transpires along this "hypothalamic-pituitary axis." For example, the biological or vegetative signs of depression (e.g., disturbances in sleep, appetite, sex) are partially mediated in the hypothalamus, the chief connecting station where neurotransmitters and hormones affect each other. An underactive thyroid can cause depression and too many thyroid hormones can induce depression, mania, or psychosis. Conversely, during many cases of major depression, the adrenal gland releases excessive amounts of cortisol. (p. 66)

It is believed that the brain can experience a chemical imbalance of neurotransmitters that contributes to mental illness. A chemical imbalance makes it hard for the brain to function well due to neurons' difficulty moving from one to another. As a result, the brain could misread the message being transmitted and send the wrong message to the body. Neurotransmitters are responsible for the production and release of the "happy messengers" and "sad messengers" that determine mood. Hart (1999) observes that as long as these neurotransmitters are stable and balanced, we experience tranquility and happiness.

The diathesis–stress theory is another explanation of the biological model. According to this theory, abnormal behavior and/or mental disorder results from both biological and genetic factors (nature) and life experiences (nurture). In other words, when a biological or genetic predisposition (diathesis) interacts with the environment and life events (stressors), behaviors or psychological disorders can be triggered. Studies have shown that genetics has distal as well as great influence on etiology of mental disorder (Green-McCreight, 2006; Maxmen & Ward, 1995; Millon, et al., 2005). Basing their study and analysis on twin and adoption studies, Maxmen and Ward (1995) conclude that genetic factors are the major cause of schizophrenia. The principal assumption of this biopsychosocial model is that the problem with mental health is not only associated with human experience. Rather, biological, psychological, and social factors all have a great impact on human functioning. An example of a biological factor might be an individual who becomes depressed due to cancer (medical condition). A social factor might be an individual who lost a close loved one to death, and a psychological factor might be an individual with low self-esteem.

Another biological variable of personality disorder is temperament, which has been described as the biological soil where our personality grows. It is also the hidden or underlying biological basis for human behavior. Personality disorders are thought to result from a difficult temperament; personality traits and temperaments are dimensional characteristics that are heritable and manifest early in life. Thomas and Chess (1977), studied 136 children by monitoring development closely for a number of years, and identified nine categories of behavior which they termed temperament. These include activity level, rhythmicity (regularity), approach or withdrawal, adaptability, intensity of

reaction, threshold of responsiveness (sensitivity to stimuli), quality of mood (disposition), distractibility, attention span, and persistence. The researchers maintain that these aspects of temperament are observable shortly after birth and remain consistent throughout childhood, demonstrating that they have some constitutional (if not genetic) basis. They further argue that the plasticity of the temperament permits environmental factors such as childrearing practices to have an equal or greater influence on development and our personality. Belsky & Pluess (2009) suggest that the manner in which caregivers responds to a child's temperament predisposes the child to personality disorders. Negatively emotional or difficult infants and toddlers are more affected by their experience of rearing than those with easy temperaments. Children with a difficult temperament may experience rejection and lack of adequate love that is needed in their early stages of development. Such rejection may eventually lead to social alienation and low self-esteem in adulthood, thereby causing entrenched dysfunctional ways of thinking, feeling, behaving, and relating. For instance, a child who is restrained by a parent because of his or her hyperactive temperament may go on to develop an avoidant personality disorder as a way to cope with constant frustration and parental disapproval.

The Socio-Cultural Perspective argues that mental disorders are caused by social and cultural dynamics that affect people, families, society at large, and nations. This model suggests that certain demographic variations and external situations (i.e., age, gender, race, and socioeconomic status) along with social values can trigger mental illness or personality disorders. For instance, Yarhouse, Butman, and McRay (2005) argue for the influence of socioeconomic status as one of the factors responsible for mental health. In their opinion, people with lower socioeconomic conditions are

predisposed to stress and adjustment disorders, some problems of mind and body, and sometimes serious expressions of mental illness such as psychosis, bipolar disorder, personality disorders, and substance-related disorders. Leahy (2007) observes that even though a strong genetic explanation exists for the prevalence of bipolar disorder, life situations such as loss of job or relationship and negative family environment can add to the expression and manifestation of this disorder.

In the same way, the developmental environment has been argued as the potential cause or etiology of Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD). Studies show that the occurrence and manifestation of ASPD during adulthood can be linked to maltreatment during childhood. In fact, it has been suggested that the environment's contribution to ASPD is 59.1 percent, whereas heritability accounts for 40.1 percent. Other social factors that can contribute to ASPD are the nature of attachment in early life (insecure or disorganized), the nature or type of parenting (harsh, ineffective discipline, and lack of warmth), and family pattern of living (scarce resources, lack of social support, high level of stress). Environmental influence also plays important role in the etiology of cluster C personality disorders (avoidant personality disorder, dependent personality disorder, and obsessive-compulsive personality disorder). In other words, parental overcontrol, overprotection, overconcern, overnurturance and strict discipline can be major causes of these disorders.

Cultural factors may also have a powerful pathogenic impact as triggers of psychopathology. They can contribute to the severity levels of symptoms of mental disorders. However, it has been observed that many scientists, psychologists, and mental health professionals downplay the influence of cultural factors in mental disorder

diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes. This is because modern psychiatry is based on the idea that mental illnesses are primarily organic disorders of the brain. The medicalized approach suggests that the symptoms and treatment of disorders ought to be the same whether patients are from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Canada, or America. However, due to the diversity of modern society, this approach faces challenges. A crusade of "cultural competence" has developed in which mental health professionals and providers are expected to pay attention to the effects of ethnicity, sex, religious beliefs, social class, and national origin on their clients' mental health and mental illness (Sue & Sue, 2008).

The fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, *DSM-5* (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), recognizes the role or influence of ethnic and cultural factors in the diagnosis of mental disorders. The manual incorporates a greater cultural sensitivity rather than a simple list of culture-bound syndromes. DSM-5 updates criteria to reflect cross-cultural variations in presentations, gives more detailed and structured information about cultural concepts of distress, and includes a clinical interview tool to facilitate comprehensive, person-centered assessments. It also shows that different cultures and communities exhibit or explain symptoms in various ways. Therefore it is important that clinicians are aware of relevant contextual information stemming from a patient's culture, race, ethnicity, religion, and/or geographical origin.

Certain mental disorders may have cultural or local connotations as well as etiological explanations. Understanding such distinctions will help clinicians diagnose disorders more accurately and treat them more effectively. For instance, in Africa (and specifically Nigeria, where this author was born and raised), mental illnesses and disorders are believed to result from attack by evil people, witch doctors, witches,

sorcerers, and native doctors. Popular belief alleges that mental disorders are inflicted on people by supernatural or diabolical powers.

The Cognitive-Behavioral Perspective postulates that people react emotionally and behaviorally to occurrences according to their interpretation of them. In other words, thoughts (cognitions) lead to emotions and subsequent behavior. The assumption of this model is that certain inherited dispositions such as temperament (nature) interact with children's environments (nurture) to influence the ultimate shape of their personality and beliefs about the world. In other words, individuals tend to form self-concepts that affect the behavior they display. These concepts can be positive or negative and can be affected by a person's environment. Hence, people with personality disorders act in the dysfunctional ways they do because their beliefs and assumptions about themselves, other people, and the world around them are faulty.

The cognitive factor has been explained by Millon et al., (2004). They reveal that the mind constantly selects and collects information about the world and stores it in its conscious and unconscious levels. It takes into consideration past possibilities and future occurrences in the development of plans that will enhance its own goals by taking actions and judging outcomes. The mind is believed to be constantly providing meaning for the world, others, and the future. Hence, any distortion in the mind's perception would lead to disorders in human personality. For instance, a paranoid personality will change honest remarks into criticism, whereas a narcissistic personality believes in his or her superiority to others.

Schema theory was developed to further explain the influence of cognitive-behavioral in the etiology of mental disorders. Schemas are organizing frameworks of the

mind and patterns of internal experience that include memories, beliefs, emotions, and thoughts. Maladaptive schemas are formed when a child's core needs are not met. These core needs are safety, security, nurturance, acceptance, respect, autonomy, guidance, direction, love, attention, approval, self-expression, joy, pleasure, and relaxation. The problem with personality disorders is that when these core needs are not met during childhood, early maladaptive schemas develop. In essence, people with personality disorders have schemas that cause them to have a lot of problems with other people, and with their own feelings about themselves.

For instance, Leahy (2007) observes that individuals who are used to negative cognitive styles and who lack the skills to regulate emotion, solve daily problems, and resolve conflicts are more likely to experience recurrent episodes of bipolar disorder. He explains that specific patterns of manic over-optimism and energizing, goal-oriented thinking might exacerbate manic episodes and increase risky behavior. Furthermore, the behavioral factor for illicit drug abuse and dependence has been linked to reinforcement derived from the drug-abusing lifestyle. In other words, the use of cocaine and other psychomotor stimulants such as ethanol, opioids, nicotine, and sedatives may serve as reinforcers. Hence, through respondent and operant conditioning, environmental events formerly linked with drug use can lead to drug-seeking behavior. Regular use of methamphetamines and opioids has been associated with elevated rates of mood and anxiety disorders, conduct disorder (CD), and borderline personality disorder (BPD). More frequent use of either drug is associated with increased risk of pathology, whereas frequent use of both tremendously increases that risk.

The Spiritual Perspective argues that spiritual dimensions and explanations exist for the causes of mental or personality disorders. It assumes that the causes of human problems are not only psychological, biological, socio-cultural, and behavioral, but also spiritual. Human beings are not only psychological and biological beings, they are also spiritual. Spirituality is manifested in the ways individuals feel, think, act, and relate to others. In fact, spirituality is one of the foundations of humanity.

Spirituality is defined by Benner (1998) as "human quest for and experience of meaning, God, and the other … an expression of a yearning for connections that we unconsciously recognize will clarify the meaning of our existence and secure our identity and its fulfillment" (p. 87). A spiritual person can be described as someone who pays attention to the longings and yearnings of the soul. Although not all spirituality can be regarded as religious, it can become religious when a person begins to relate to a higher power and to respond to this relationship in spiritual ways, like fasting and praying. Pruyser (1976) narrates a story that illustrates the dynamic of spirituality in mental or personal disorder, summarized as follows: Lynn came to my office sad, crying, and distraught. She found out that her husband of 15 years' marriage, a pastor, was found having an affair with a church member. She was confused and devastated. I empathized with her and tried to encourage her and arranged to meet with her again. During the week, she called to inform me that she had a dream in which God told her to return to her marriage and that he would touch the heart of her husband if she did. That is, God told her that he would stop the problem for them.

In this story, spirituality became a major part of the problem. Lynn's problem was not only marital, social, or psychological, but also spiritual. Her spiritual solution or

approach to the problem became a spiritual problem. Therefore, spiritual solutions sometimes can become problems, and sometimes spirituality can serve as both the source of the solution and the problem. At times people who claim to have experienced spiritual conflicts have been known to demonstrate symptoms of mental or personality disorders. Such conflicts may result from a history of abuse or neglect or a rigid worldview with excessive guilt and shame. In these people's minds they did something so bad that they are unforgivable. They see God as an angry person who has rejected them. They have difficulty experiencing His presence, and interpret this as God abandoning them to their sin.

However, the theological or biblical explanation for the spiritual perspective on the etiology of mental or personality disorders is based on the nature of humanity. This is to say, a human being is a product of God's breath or spirit. Genesis 2:7 records: "Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." The Hebrew word *neshamah* translated "breath" is always applied to God or man, never to any irrational creature. The phrase "breath of life" expresses the spiritual and principal element in man, which is not formed but breathed by the Creator into the physical form of man. Theologians have developed various arguments to explain the nature or components of humans; the most prevalent views are the bipartite or dichotomy and tripartite or trichotomy. However, the best theological assumption is to say that man is a material and immaterial being. The immaterial part of man is known as either spirit (*pneuma*) or soul (*psyche*). Putting the two together, Benner (1998) observes, "Spirit denotes life as having its origin in God, and soul denotes life as constituted in humans" (p. 54). He argues that "humans are not a

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composite of a number of parts; we do have a spirit or have a body – we are embodied spirits" (p. 54).

It must be noted that human behavior, emotion, and thinking are affected as a result of the fall. Ever since, humanity has struggled with the reality and manifestation of a fallen or depraved nature, and mental health has become the platform where it is demonstrated. The early church fathers believed that sin casts a stain on the soul. Because the soul brings together the material and spiritual worlds, unhealthy spirituality will lead to unhealthy psychological behaviors (Benner, 1998). Mental health disorders are manifestations of a fallen nature. Therefore, the DSM is the manual for the classification of the manifestations of our fallen nature.

Application in Marriage and Family Counseling

The roles of diagnosis and assessment in marriage and family counseling cannot be downplayed. Diagnosis refers to an evaluative process meant to discern and understand dysfunctional relationship patterns in individuals and members of a marriage and family, whereas assessment helps to provide and select appropriate treatment plans. Hence, any therapeutic process not anchored on a solid assessment is tantamount to a waste of time. Whiston (2009) observes that accurate and sound assessment in counseling is a vital component of effective therapy, whether in family therapy or any other form of therapy. The use of assessment and diagnosis helps to discover the level of decline and decay in the family subsystem being helped, and also in other areas of the family system.

Williams, Edwards, Patterson, and Chamow (2011) observe that assessment in family counseling should follow a systemic approach in which every member is regarded as part of the cause of the problem in the family. So, assessment should focus on the

relational force within the family rather than personal idiosyncrasies. In the researchers' opinion, assessment in marriage and family therapy should cover other dimensions including biological, psychological, cultural, and spiritual components. The biological assessment helps the therapist to assess the impact of pharmacological and organic factors as root causes of conflicts in marriage and family. With the psychological assessment, the therapist will be able to discern the roles of affect, behavior, and cognition in a couple's psychopathology. The cultural component helps the therapist to assess the influence of nurture, environment, beliefs, and values on couples' unhealthy relationships; the spiritual provides an understanding of how couples give meaning to what happens to them through the lens of their worldviews and beliefs.

Patterson, Williams, Edwards, Chamow, and Grauf-Grounds (2009) suggest that assessment and diagnosis in marriage and family counseling must be holistic. They argue that assessment must cover the following domains: exploration of the problems at hand, solutions tried, relevant life events, issues of life, bioneurological factors, and couple and family psychosocial systems. Nichols (2010) notes that different approaches have been developed by various schools of family therapy to provide adequate assessment for family problems. For instance, the focus of behaviorists is to provide basic information and goals for therapy using questionnaires; structuralists focus on observation of the functional or dysfunctional nature of the family; Bowenians provide a gestalt overview of the whole family using genograms; psychoanalysts gather information on clients' personal histories; experimentalists look into expression and suppression of emotions; and solution-focused and narrative therapists forgo any method of assessment.

Sperry (2012) and Filsinger (1983) argue that the methods of assessment and diagnosis in family therapy have changed from an individual approach to a systemic and dyadic model. This does not mean that the individual approach is not important, as "individual pathology can cause family disturbance as well as vice versa" (Filsinger, 1983, p. 13). However, Sperry (2012) observes that because "an individual is inseparable from the system, which is the site of pathology" (p. 2), "an adequate assessment and diagnosis of an individual must necessarily involve the entire family system" (p. 3).

Then, what types of assessment measures and tools are to be used in marriage and family counseling? Based on a review of the work of Sperry (2012); Filsinger (1983); Williams, Edwards, Patterson, and Chamow (2011); Jacob and Tennenbaum (1988); Hodge (2005); Pargament (2007); and Nedumaruthumchalil (2009), various types of tools to conduct assessment in marriage and family therapy are suggested. However, due to the limitation of the present study, only six will be discussed briefly in the following paragraphs. They include: Qualitative Assessment, Standardized Assessment, Observational Assessment, Ongoing Assessment, Self-Report Assessment, and Spiritual Assessment.

The **Qualitative Assessment** provides the therapist with the interpretation, understanding, and hermeneutics of the experiences and nuances within marriage and family relationships. This type of assessment plays a role similar to that of qualitative research in scientific investigation. The goal of qualitative assessment in marriage and family therapy is to help the therapist fully understand "family members' thoughts, actions, interactions, conversations, realities, motivations, beliefs, and lives in terms of words, figures, pictures, diagrams, matrices, drawings, observations, and stories" (Duffy

& Chenai, cited in Sperry, 2012, p. 18). The four clinical methods used in qualitative assessment are Observation, Interview, Genogram, and Recursive Frame Analysis (RFA).

The observational assessment in couple and family therapy is used to observe the structure, hierarchy, and interactions within the systems. It assesses the constitution of the membership within a marriage or family; the patterns of relationship that exist among them; the patterns of role playing, decision making, and use of power; the expression of affect; closeness; distance; conflict management; and methods of solving problems. Observational assessment usually occurs at the opening of therapy and continues throughout the period of therapy. It is used to conceptualize the case, develop appropriate interventions, and evaluate therapy results and dynamics. Diagnostic interviewing is used to discover the areas in which couples or family members experience problems and where they gain strength.

A genogram is a graphic and visual composition that represents the generational relationships that exist within the family. It can be further used to gain knowledge about the wider scope of the family, as well as the family's religious practices and cultural distinctiveness. RFA is a tool used to assess the level and nature of conversations among couples and families. It helps the therapist to understand recurring subjects in couple and family conversations.

The **Standardized Assessment** is a form of couple and family evaluation that uses standardized tests or psychological instruments whose questions, administration, scoring, and interpretation are consistent with predetermined standards. It is used in marriage and family counseling to gather information about family members' behavior, and to predict or project how they will behave in the future. Four principal assessment

tools are used in this model: the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2), the Millon Clinical Multiaxal Inventory-III (MCMI-III), the Rorschach Inkblot Test (RIT), and the Kinetic Family Drawing Test (KFD) (Sperry, 2012).

The MMPI-2 measures the "behavioral symptoms and mood states that may have an impact on a partner" (Sperry, 2012, p. 55). It is administered to individual 18 years and older. The primary purpose of MCMI-III is to assess marital partners' personality styles and disorders. It helps the therapist to fully understand the personality nuances behind the behavioral patterns and problems that family members present in therapy. The RIT is used to gather data for deeper personality examination of couples and parents involved in issues of child abuse and child custody. The KFD is administered to individuals within a marriage or family to gather information about family system dynamics and functionality (Sperry, 2012).

The **Observational Assessment** is used to examine and precisely document the behavioral patterns of family members. It involves watching, recording, and collecting information about how each and every individual in a marriage and family behaves. Observational assessment gives the therapist insight into what everyone is thinking, as opposed to what they say (Williams, Edwards, Patterson, & Chamow, 2011). The instruments used in this method of assessment are the Beavers Interactional Competence Scale (BICS), the McMaster Clinical Rating Scale (MCRS), the Clinical Rating Scale (CRS), the Global Assessment of Relational Functioning (GARF), the Marital Instability Index (MII), and the Child and Adult Relational Experimental Index (CARE-index) (Sperry, 2012).

The BICS is used in therapy to observe lacks and needs that are present in two or more generational family systems. With the use of diverse rating scales, therapists are able to examine the levels of strength (competencies) and weakness (dysfunctions) prevalent in the family (Williams, Edwards, Patterson, & Chamow, 2011). The MCRS assesses the general functioning of the family by evaluating six areas of family functioning: 1) Problem Solving, 2) Communication, 3) Roles, 4) Affective Responsiveness, 5) Affective Involvement, and 6) Behavior Control. The CRS is used to observe the three domains of the Circumplex Model of marital and family systems: cohesion, flexibility, and communication. The GARF evaluates the general functioning of the family by focusing on skills for problem solving, organization, and climate change. The MII is used to assess the risk of divorce in a marriage by evaluating the couple's cognitive-behavioral patterns. The CARE-index is designed to observe the degree and nature of parenting in order to ascertain whether or not children are at risk.

The **Ongoing Assessment** is used in marriage and family counseling to assess, evaluate, and measure the outcomes of the therapeutic process. It allows the therapist to gauge the effectiveness, efficacy, and efficiency of the therapy. Explaining these three developmental levels in marital and family therapy, Sperry (2012) observes:

Therapeutic effectiveness is the determination that a treatment has a beneficial effect and is the expected outcome for a typical client treated in common practice settings by a typical clinician … therapeutic efficacy is the expected outcome for clients treated under optimal conditions by highly qualified clinicians … therapeutic efficiency refers to highly beneficial treatment tailored to the unique needs of a specific client ... Therapeutic effectiveness and efficacy answer the

question, which treatment or approach is better or best? … Therapeutic efficiency answers the question, which is the best treatment for this client and how can it be optimally provided? (p. 119)

In order to achieve the best therapeutic effectiveness, the following assessment tools are recommended:

1. The Systematic Assessment of Family Environment (SAFE) is used to measure the functioning of three relational subsystem levels of the family system by using two system functioning factors for each subsystem level. The three subsystems are dyadic marital-executive subsystem, parent-child subsystem, and extended family subsystem

2. The Self-Report Family Inventory (SFI) is designed to measure family health and competence, conflict resolution, cohesion, leadership, and emotional expressiveness

3. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) is used to measure and determine the four components of adjustment among couples: dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, and affectional expression

4. The Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Revised (MSI-R) is designed for use at the beginning and end of therapy to discuss a couple's presenting problem, treatment goals, and evaluation of therapeutic outcomes.

The **Self-Report Assessment** is a process whereby every member of the family assesses the situations and conditions of the family. It uses rapid assessment instruments or pencil and paper tests to evaluate family members' attitudes, beliefs, and levels of

functioning that can only be revealed by them. Common tools or instruments for collecting self-report and information from couples are:

1. Locke-Wallace Marital Test (LWMT), to measure marital satisfaction and adjustment

2. Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), to evaluate the quality of relationship as understood by couples

3. Spousal Inventory of Desired Changes and Relationship Barriers (SIDCARB), to assess marital stability and satisfaction

4. Marital Disaffection Scale (MDS), to ascertain levels of disaffection and decline of feelings toward one's spouse

5. Areas of Change Questionnaires (ACQ), to examine the amount and direction of change that partners desire in their marriage

6. Intimacy Needs Survey (INS), to help couples find out whether their intimacy needs are met by their partners, and Sexual Desire Inventory (SDI), to assess whether each partner's sexual needs are being met fully by the other partner

The **Spiritual Assessment** in marriage and family therapy "provides a mechanism for identifying and marshalling spiritual and religious strengths that may be used to assist in the amelioration of problems" (Hodge, 2005, p. 342) that may ensue among couples. It has further been described as a method of collecting, arranging, and analyzing spiritually based data or information into a logical template to provide the basis for interventions. Some observations indicate that certain degrees of spirituality and religion have been found to decrease divorce rates and provide more satisfaction and commitment in marriage. Commenting on this, Nedumaruthumchalil (2009) observes that today, vast

majority of people as well as families have adopted some form of expression for their spirituality, whether within or outside formal religion. Many who seek help for physical, emotional, or interpersonal problems are also in spiritual distress. Nedumaruthumchalil suggests that family therapists and human service professionals need to attend to the spiritual domain of human experience in order to fully comprehend the needs and sufferings of clients as well as assist them in their healing and growth. In his opinion, this is necessary because as humans are hurt by relationships, they are also healed by relationships. Therefore, spiritual assessment serves as a potential resource for therapists to help couples find healing in broken relationships.

Through spiritual assessment, the therapist is able to determine "the salience of spirituality to the client, the salience of religious affiliation or community to the client, the salience of spirituality to the problem, and the salience of spirituality to the solution" (Paragament, 2007, p. 211). Hodge (2005) suggests five tools to be used for spiritual assessment in marriage and family therapy: Spiritual Histories, Spiritual Lifemaps, Spiritual Genograms, Spiritual Ecomaps, and Spiritual Ecograms.

Spiritual Histories: A spiritual assessment tool used by a therapist to collect verbal information and narratives from clients about their spiritual stories from childhood to present, and to know the anthropological effects they have on the following domains: affect, behavior, cognition, communion, conscience, and intuition.

Spiritual Lifemaps: A diagrammatic spiritual assessment for the measurement of a couple's spiritual journey based on their relationship with God over a period of time. This tool helps to ascertain where they were, where they are at present, and where they

are heading in their spiritual journey. It is also used to help remind couples of spiritual basics they have used to solve past problems and they can apply to future situations.

Spiritual Genograms: Used to assess the traditional spiritual structure of more than three generations of the family. This is helpful in therapy when clients or couples bring up spiritual or religious matters.

Spiritual Ecomaps: Assess the present, experiential, empirical, and pragmatic spiritual relationships of couples from various spiritual traditions. It is used by therapists to assess couples' spiritual experiences related to their relationships and encounters with God, religious or spiritual rites, and other transcendental phenomena.

Spiritual Ecograms: Synthesize the assessment dynamism of spiritual ecomaps and genograms to construct connections and relationships between the family's past and present spiritual situations in a single diagrammatic measure. It helps to measure levels of family members' spiritual commitment, religious affiliation and beliefs, and spiritual rites.

Conclusion

Marriage and family therapy is a process that requires a process. One of the steps required is assessment and diagnosis. Therapy is more than talking with clients; it is also about knowing them. It is about knowing the nature and causes of their problems, and possible interventions. The various types and tools of assessments and diagnoses discussed in this chapter help to assess the psychosocial, biological, socio-cultural, cognitive-behavioral, and spiritual domains of couples in therapy. The next chapter will focus on the issue of treatment planning in marriage and family therapy.

CHAPTER 5

TREATMENT PLANNING IN MARITAL AND FAMILY COUNSELING

The negative impact of conflict on marriage and family is felt not only by the individual, but often by everyone in the family system. All relationships experience some degree of conflict; therefore, conflict alone does not necessarily suggest that a family is dysfunctional. However, it is very common for children to be impacted by their parents' conflict. When this pain is severe and chronic, then the family can be said to be dysfunctional. In these instances couples therapy, family therapy, or both can be quite beneficial.

Couples therapy is obviously limited to the marital dyad. On the other hand, family therapy can involve either the entire family or a subsystem of the family. It is a process whereby a therapist helps parents, the primary subsystem, to make shifts that can produce changes in the entire family. Family therapy has also been defined as any form of psychological intervention that uses a conceptual framework to give primary emphasis to the family system and aims to affect the entire family structure (Glick, Berman, Clarkin, & Rait, 2000). Ultimately, the overarching goal of family therapy is to facilitate changes that lead to healthier interactions among family members.

The journey of marital and family counseling begins after proper assessment and diagnosis has occurred. Through assessment and diagnosis, the counselor attempts to know and understand the nature of the problem at hand. Once the counselor understands the nature of the presenting problem, he/she can provide ways to solve or treat the problem. This is where treatment planning in marital and family counseling comes into play.

Meaning and Intent of Treatment Planning

Various definitions for treatment planning exist. It has been defined as a structured layout of steps and methods used by a therapist to provide intervention for any presenting problem. Zwolinski and Zwolinski (2009) describe treatment planning as any written plan constructed by a therapist and used to guide how therapy should ideally proceed in order to address clinical and any other relevant life issues. Treatment planning is the definition of issues to be discussed in counseling, as well as the identification of the treatment techniques that will be used to solve the problem(s). It serves as a guide or map that structures the focus of the therapeutic contract, comprised of the suggested steps or plans to be taken by the therapist. Treatment planning can also be described as the documented realistic and measurable goal, objective, methodology, approach, and technique that will dovetail with the marital and family therapeutic process, as well as intervention.

The major task of treatment planning is to help a therapist focus on how each and every problem presented in therapy will be handled. In other words, treatment planning seeks to specify the nature of each problem area, the expected change (short- and long-term goals), and the processes by which the goals will be achieved. It should also describe how the problem will be managed by examining the type of treatment (group or individual counseling), the frequency of treatment contact, and the time frame for treatment. Treatment planning makes use of information collected during assessment and diagnosis to guide the therapist in planning a treatment method to be used with the client.

Treatment planning also serves as a means of charting the counseling process so that both the counselor and the client have a road map that shows how they will move

from their point of origin—the client's presenting problems and underlying difficulties—to their therapeutic destination—a solution to the problems at hand—as well as providing ways to cope with the presenting problems. Therefore, treatment planning is the description of the starting point (where the clients are) and the destination of the therapy (where the clients are going), with a map or plan for how to navigate between the two points. It can help a therapist think analytically and critically about which interventions are best suited for a particular client or couple. What then are the benefits of treatment planning in marriage and family counseling? Maruish (2002); Zwolinski and Zwolinski (2009); and Patterson, Williams, Edwards, Chamow, and Grauf-Gronds (2009) suggest the following benefits.

Treatment planning helps to plan the treatment that will be provided. Therapy is like a journey from the unknown to the known. It is a journey that requires knowing where one is at in the present, where one is heading, and the possible ways to get there. Therefore, treatment planning serves as a reference map for the therapist and the client during every session, or when they appear to get lost in the process. In other words, treatment planning is like the map that guides the journey of the treatment because it provides a specific guide on what the focus of the treatment will be, with the outcomes that the client and the therapist are working toward.

Treatment planning also helps to specify the type and use of treatment or intervention that the counselor will employ to effect change. It provides a point of reference to which the clients and counselors may refer to ascertain that the treatment is on track with the goals. Furthermore, treatment planning helps to prepare clients to understand what to expect during the course of counseling and after counseling has

concluded. It also helps to determine the level of progress that is made at the beginning of therapy, during therapy, and at the end of therapy.

Another benefit of treatment planning is that it helps to provide a common guide that can direct the efforts of all members of the behavioral health care team. It serves as a tool for facilitating collaboration between behavioral and medical health providers. Sometimes treatment planning is needed or required by managed behavioral health care administrations (MBHOs) for authorization of therapy and proper accountability on the part of therapists. It also provides documentation that helps to determine whether clients are receiving quality or standard treatments and interventions. A documented treatment plan serves as a form of protection against certain types of legal actions that might be brought against the therapist. That is to say, a mutually agreed-upon and documented treatment plan can help the therapist avoid professional and legal misfortune.

Treatment planning provides the insurance company with information about the goal, nature, and dynamics of the therapist's work, and facilitates the method of payment. Treatment goals can be described as the patient's clinical and life goals as delineated in the treatment plan. With treatment planning the therapist and patient understand the clinical direction in which they are going in therapy and how to get there. It helps to delineate the ultimate destination (goals) of the therapy and the course of action (objectives) to be taken to reach that destination.

Treatment planning is a necessary component of marriage and family counseling. It helps the counselor to define, understand, and describe how counseling addresses the client's conflicts and problems. Furthermore, treatment planning can serve as the contract between the therapist and the couple or family seeking therapy. Therefore, treatment

planning must be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (SMART)

(Maruish, 2002).

Contents of Treatment Planning

When a couple or family willingly comes to therapy, they usually expect to find

hope, healing, and solutions to the problems that brought them to counseling. They often

they have high expectations of the therapist, believing that he or she will work some sort

of wonder or miracle. They may expect that the therapist will develop strategies and

mechanisms that can bring about the desired miracle or solution. The methods and means

of solutions—interventions—that the therapist employs are coded in the treatment

planning. What then are the contents of treatment planning in marriage and family

therapy?

The contents of treatment planning are based on information gathered during the

assessment regarding counseling goals. Williams, Edwards, Patterson, and Chamow

(2011) suggest the following five variables as principal bases for the construction of

dynamic treatment planning in marriage and family counseling: 1) the therapist's

theoretical approach, 2) the therapist's evidence-based research, 3) the therapist's life

experience, 4) the therapist's clinical experience, and 5) quality supervision. Patterson,

Williams, Edwards, Chamow, and Grauf-Grounds (2009); Maruish (2002); and O'Leary,

Heyman, and Jongsma (1998) suggest the following as the components of treatment

planning in marriage and family counseling:

Identification of Presenting Problem is the first step in treatment planning. At

this time the therapist makes a list of all the problems and issues presented by the clients,

as identified during assessment and diagnosis. This usually involves recognizing

symptoms that might have surfaced and have been observed by the client or therapist. Based on this list, the therapist and couple or family determine and agree upon which issues or problems will be treated in therapy, in order of priority. This step usually takes place during the first session when the couple or family discusses the issues or problems that have brought them to therapy. The therapist and the couple must pinpoint and select the most crucial problems to work on during therapy.

Conceptualizing the Presenting Case, the next component of treatment planning, suggests an understanding of the type of multiaxial diagnostic classification (based on DSM-5) to be used to assess and understand the problems presented by the couple or family, and can help in the selection of therapeutic intervention. An integrative approach to conceptualization and treatment is preferred—use of multiple systems through the biopsychosocial model, which is the loci of general systems therapy (GST) and family therapy, with emphasis on the importance of the whole over the parts. This model presupposes that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and that the family rather than the individual must be treated and cared for regardless of who comes to counseling.

Defining the Treatment Aims and Goals is another content area of treatment planning. After determining the order of priority of the presenting problems, the therapist needs to comprehend the purpose for which the couple or family has come for therapy. That is, the therapist must know the aims and goals of the couple or family. What do they want to change? What changes do they expect to occur by the end of therapy? Aims are the expected results of the therapy; goals are the variables involved in realizing aims. However, it must be noted that therapeutic goals always dovetail with the focus of

therapy. The principal goals of marital and family therapy are to help the family find solutions to the presenting problems, reduce the symptoms, increase intimacy, increase role flexibility and adaptability, improve psychosexual functioning, balance power, clarify communication, resolve conflictual interaction, and improve relationships with children and families of origin.

Construction of Long-Term Treatment Goals and Objectives is another component of treatment planning. These goals are the changes that the therapist expects, and will serve as a catalyst for the realization of goals set by the couple or family in therapy. These therapeutic goals define how the clients' expected changes will be realized. Goals specify the expected positive results of the therapy, whereas objectives focus on the various steps and variables that are involved in realizing them. The objective of marriage and family planning should be constructed in such a way as to attain the goals of therapy. Therefore, therapeutic goals and objectives are expected to be achievable, realistic, measurable, and stated positively.

Selection of Therapeutic Interventions in treatment planning helps the marriage and family therapist to handle the problems presented in therapy based upon the goals and objectives of the therapy. Interventions are like tools in the therapist's toolbox. They are the plans, techniques, methods, models, and approaches that the therapist employs to provide solutions for the presenting problems, and to achieve the goals and objectives of therapy.

Because selection of appropriate therapeutic interventions or techniques to be used in marriage and family therapy can be challenging, therapists can opt for either a narrow (single) or broad (eclectic) approach. Maruish (2002 suggests that selection of the

right therapeutic interventions is based on the following: 1) clinical practice guidelines, 2) treatment manuals, 3) empirically supported treatments, 4) appropriate level of care, 5) type or model of intervention, 6) intent of the intervention, and 7) frequency and duration of treatment.

Setting of Therapy Duration and Time is another important content area of treatment planning. It states the frequency of therapy and determines whether it will be a short-term or long-term process. Family counseling has tended toward brief, problem-focused treatments because counselors focus only on a specific problem, and when that problem is solved the counseling comes to an end. In family counseling, the nature of the problem presented, the idiosyncrasies of the couple or family in therapy, the type of intervention, and the regulations imposed by an agency or insurance company determine the frequency and duration of counseling. However, treatment planning helps to determine how long the treatment or intervention sessions may be.

Therapeutic Termination and Referral are included in the treatment planning of marriage and family therapy to help determine when the therapy ends and when to refer or transfer clients to other qualified professionals. Ideally the therapist and clients agree about when therapy should end and when a referral is indicated. However, the criteria for terminating therapy may be based on any of the following observable and objective reasons: resolution of marital or family conflict, removal of significant psychiatric symptoms, development of coping skills, and/or functional living. Therefore, competence-based therapy is the acceptance of the fact that therapists are limited in certain areas of care and intervention. As a result, marriage and family counselors are

encouraged to inculcate within their treatment planning a provision for adequate referrals and networking with other mental and behavioral health providers.

Context of Treatment Planning

Marital problems are numerous, and have been classified and arranged into different diagnostic categories. However, for the sake of proper intervention and dynamic treatment planning, it is necessary to understand the circumstances, conditions, and problems that precipitate the need for therapy and influence the contents of treatment planning. This section examines the context; that is, the problems that dovetail with the nature and purpose of treatment planning.

Marriage is a struggle because it is often not easy for two people who are physically, psychologically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually distinct to live with one another. Parrot and Parrot (2006) argue that misunderstanding is a natural part of marriage because no matter how deep the love between a man and woman, they can never be free from conflict. Hence, conflict in marriage is inevitable and unavoidable. Family conflict has been regarded as the vitamin that helps to enhance family stability and health. Any couple who claims to never have conflicts has not been married long, or is living in denial. Therefore, to construct an effective treatment plan requires conceptualization of the causes and nature of conflicts in marriage and family.

In order to provide effective counseling to couples and families, counselors need to have a working knowledge of how behaviors and problems develop. Hawkins (2006) suggests that five factors influence and control human behavior and personality. These factors are core, soul, body, temporal systems, and supernatural systems. These factors work together in an interrelated manner to influence the entire system of what is known

as "concentric circles." In order to provide treatment for couples, counselors must be aware of all the aspects, factors, and contexts that influenced the development of the presenting problems. Review of related literature (Guerin, Fay, Burden, & Kautto, 1987; Balswick & Balswick, 2007; Gottman, 1999; Matthews & Hubbard, 2004) shows that the causes of marital and family conflicts can be attributed to spiritual or theological, sociological, psychological, physiological, and behavioral factors.

The **Spiritual or Theological Factor** is based on the effect of the fall—the entrance of sin—on marital and family relationships. Anderson (2000) attributes the causes of some life problems not only to psychological or physiological factors, but also to spiritual factors. Because God created humankind as spiritual creatures with the ability to know and to love, marriage is not just a physical or emotional institution. It is a spiritual institution.

Marriage is more than a social contract or sacred covenant with another person. Rather, it is a spiritual union and experience designed to help couples know God better, to be closer to Him, and to love Him more dearly. Marriage is a spiritual discipline that enables us to confront our own selfishness and sinfulness. After the fall, the first couple (Adam and Eve) turned away from God, which brought devastating consequences for them and for us. If marriage was one of God's ways or means of drawing humanity closer to Him, then original sin has had its first and most powerful effect on marriage.

God intended for marriage to demonstrate His nature as a relational being, and His ideal for marriage is connected to His essence. Therefore, God expects marriage and the marital experience to be a mutual loving and connecting relationship that demonstrates what He Himself experiences as Father, Son, and Spirit.

God instituted the Edenic marriage between Adam and Eve so that they could have a relationship with Him and with each other. However, after the fall in the garden, their capacity for a relationship with God and with each other was negatively impacted. The entrance of sin brought the emergence of conflict in marriage and in family relationships. Hence, humanity's fallen nature and its imperfections became the spiritual cause of conflict in the world, in marriage, and in the family. It is not the marriage that is the problem, but the nature of the people in the marriage relationship.

The therapeutic implication of this in treatment planning is that the individual's personal shortcomings and not just the presenting problem need to be addressed. The presenting problem is just a manifestation or symptom of the fallen human nature. The brokenness of God's image within each person is the catalyst for dysfunctions within relationships. Therefore, providing treatment or spiritual restoration of this brokenness in the image-bearers (couples and family members) who come to counseling should be considered a condition for treatment planning in marriage and family counseling. The task of the pastoral counselor is to assess and correctly diagnose the theological malady at the core of humanity's dilemma, and to provide treatment that will address the problem. However, treatment must be not only therapeutic (present), but also soteriological and eschatological (future). It must provide both present and future wholeness—that is; satisfaction and salvation, happiness and holiness, resolution and reconciliation.

The **Sociological Factor** stresses the effect of social change on marriage and family relationships. Guerin, Fay, Burden, and Kautto (1987) observe that the sociocultural construct of marriage by people can influence how they behave in their marriages and families. The meaning of marriage and how it affects the marital

relationship have been classified into three parts: religious, social, and personal. From the religious point of view, marriage and the family are viewed as sacred institutions established by God and maintained by religious leaders. Hence, whatever happens in marriage—such as who to marry, when to marry, where to marry, how to relate, how to resolve crises, and so on—must be determined by religious regulations.

Serious conflicts in marriage begin when one partner believes in the sacred or religious meaning of marriage and the other does not. This type of conflict in marriage is known as "spiritual incompatibility." It occurs when couples or members of the family are not united or alike in their religious or spiritual values, morals, standards, and more as it relates to the institution of marriage. It is like the proverbial house that is divided against itself and cannot stand.

The social meaning of marriage views it as a social responsibility or obligation. Marriage is a transaction between the couple's families and the community, between God and the couple. As a result, marriage and family relationships are determined by the dictates of the families of origin and the community. In this context, regarding what to do and what not to do in marriage, every married couple is obligated to adhere to the regulations and demands of their families of origin and society. This sociological factor constitutes one of the major causes of marital and family conflict in Nigeria and other African societies. Within societies such as these, couples find it difficult to delineate or separate between their love and allegiance to their extended family and their love for one another. Issues involving in-laws and extended family continue to be a cause of conflict in marriage.

Aside from the religious and social issues that cause conflict in marriage and family, the individual or personal factor cannot be downplayed. The individual meaning of marriage suggests that the demands of marriage and family are subordinate to the wellbeing and happiness of the individual. Therefore, happiness and personal fulfillment become the criteria for deciding whom to marry, by what rules to live as a family, and if and when to terminate the marriage. This concept of marriage, which can also be termed "individualism," views marriage as a contract rather than a covenant, which two people can begin and end at any time if it fails to meet their needs.

The dawn of postmodernism has redefined the nature of marriage. It has shifted from being a mutual or covenantal commitment of two people to live together "for better or for worse" to "for better or for best." The individualistic approach to marriage has made it materialistic, utilitarian, hedonistic, egoistic, and anthropocentric. As observed by Matthews and Hubbard (2004), marriage is now considered a personal and private transaction between two individuals and is subject to change or termination if they are no longer interested in the relationship. Postmodern individualism has turned marriage into a means to an end; namely, satisfaction and fulfillment.

An individual's unfinished business is another sociological factor that triggers problems in marriage and family. The dynamics of unfinished business in marriage and family are described by Friedman (1992) as a condition in which adults in the family are responsible for transferring their hopes and expectations to their children. At times these legacies from the past can serve as a useful guide for the future. On the other hand, couples also transfer their losses, anxieties, and unfulfilled dreams to their children. As a result, children can unknowingly bear within themselves the burdens of their parents'

losses and struggles. Hence, unfinished business is a present emotional reaction shaped by a past experience. The unfinished business individuals bring from their family of origin can influence the choice of whom to marry, the form of family structure, the expected needs that must be met, and roles and expectations in marriage and family. Sometimes the way our parents treated us when we were children makes us who we are as adults. We have internalized some of our parents' norms, attitudes, values, and emotional issues as our own. Therefore, in marriage and family, couples and individuals project some of the negative aspects of unfinished business or what they learned about how things should be done on one another.

To provide proper intervention for couples and families in crisis, the counselor must be able to assess, diagnose, explore, and understand a marriage or family's sociological dynamics. One spouse may have shifted from the traditional or cultural view of marriage to an individualistic view, while the other spouse has not. This often creates tension among African immigrant couples who reside in the United States. Male spouses tend to be cultural, traditional, domineering, and controlling in order to keep their wives submissive, whereas their wives may feel that they have been enlightened, exposed, and set free from traditional and cultural enslavement. This creates significant tension among African couples and families living in the Western world.

The **Psychological Factor** focuses on the roles of thoughts, feelings, emotions, and certain cognitive patterns on the negative attitudes and behaviors of married couples and families at large. Fincham, Bradbury, and Beach (1990) observe that it is necessary to understand the role cognition plays in areas of emotional expression, behavioral interactions, and satisfaction in marriage. They argue that cognition could serve as a tool

to understanding both past and present occurrences in marriage. Distressed couples are more likely to remember negative events than positive ones, and unhappy spouses use negative events from the past to make sense of present marital relationships and determine future action. Perception is one cognitive domain that Gottman (1999) stresses. He observes that the way spouses in both happy and unhappy marriages understand and interpret each other's positive and negative actions very important. Therefore, couples' perceptions about their marriage and each other can determine the stability or instability of the marital relationship. Perceptual biases may influence the course of marriage and most present marital interactions, and may also lead to marital harmony or conflict.

Gottman (1999) suggests attribution as another psychological nuance that precipitates conflict in marriage. This occurs when each spouse feels that the cause of marital conflict is inherent in the personality or psychological makeup of the other. Fincham and Bradbury (1987) observe that distressed spouses, relative to their nondistressed counterparts, tend to view the causes of negative partner behaviors as reflecting enduring, global characteristics of the partner. The results of such attribution are likely to lead to reciprocation of negative behavior and conflict escalation.

The "blame game" or attribution attitude causes each spouse to consider herself or himself as the innocent victim of the other partner's behavior. In return, the innocent or victim spouse considers the negative behavior of the other partner as the causal factor for his or her negative reaction. Therefore, when a spouse attributes causality of marital conflict to the other partner, the distress level increases, hindering the process of intervention. Each partner usually brings to therapy the attitude of "It is my spouse who has the problem, not me." In effect, the expectation is always to "fix" the other person.

Attribution is a cognitive process by which one spouse explains the cause of the other partner's negative behaviors and how to deal with them. Distressed spouses tend to make attributions for negative events that accentuate their impact by locating the cause in their partner, and by viewing it as a global influence on many areas of the relationship. However, nondistressed spouses tend to make attributions that minimize the impact of negative events by not locating the cause in the partner. Instead they see the cause as unstable and specific.

Wilson (2001) suggests another developmental factor that can be attributed to the cause of marital and family conflict. In her *Law of Relationship*, she proposed that hurt people hurt people. Wilson's assumption is based on how individuals perceive their negative early life or background, which she termed "unseen wounds." These unseen wounds are unseen scars that trigger the propensity to inflict wounds on others. In other words, a person who has been victimized tends to become a victimizer of others. Wilson further argues that a childhood hurt or wound can have significant effects in the later years, even into adulthood. In her opinion, no person is free from the reality of being deeply wounded, and consequently wounding others. She claims that wounded souls are the root cause of many maladaptive adult behaviors. The implication of this theory for marriage and family relationships is that unseen wounds in every person cause them to hurt people who are close to them, especially their spouse. This is based on the assumption that anyone who was victimized in childhood tends to victimize others in adulthood.

Stress is another psychological or emotional factor that causes marital and family conflict. Guerin, Fay, Burden, and Kautto (1987) suggest that conflicts may arise in

marriage and family when the stress level is beyond members' coping mechanisms. The death of a child or terminal illness is enough to create symptoms, no matter how functional the family may be.

Guerin, Fay, Burden, and Kautto enumerate three symptomatic effects of stress in marital relationships. The first is that stress increases the likelihood of tensions that are already in the system. Second, when levels of anxiety and emotional arousal are high, stress deactivates and releases emotional reactivity and automatic behavior learned a long time ago. The third effect of stress in marital relationships is that it increases the level of expectations that couples bring to the marriage. These expectations include the individual's wishes, spoken and unspoken desires, and terms of contract that everyone brings into marriage, whether consciously or unconsciously. Many people enter into relationships with high expectations, and dreams about what they hope will happen. Many hope that their partner will compensate for losses experienced in their families of origin. Anxiety and stress can characterize the marital relationship when these expectations are not met, and can lead to reactive behaviors or conflicts.

Knowledge about psychological causes of conflict in marriage and family can help marriage and family counselors see beyond the layer of symptoms to the root of problems. Actions and behaviors exhibited physically are usually a result of what happens in the mind. When mental attitudes change, the behaviors that cause conflict in marriage also change.

The **Physiological Factor** argues for the roles played by our physical and biological compositions in triggering conflict and crisis in marriage and family. Physiological data is sometimes seen as a useful tool for measuring marital interaction

and conflict. John Gottman and his colleagues were the first to conduct a study of the effects of physiology on marital interactions and the role of physiological arousal in marital dissolution.

Gottman (1999) observes that physiology is a useful tool for predicting whether a marriage will work. He identifies an important predictive element called *diffuse physiological arousal* (DPA). This is our body's general alarm mechanism, inherited through evolutionary means. The principal task of DPA is to mobilize us to cope with crises, emergencies, and other dangerous situations. Gottman argues that all of these types of extreme physiological conditions can transpire during marital conflict. Therefore, when marital conflict gives rise to DPA, the psychological consequences are quite negative as the couple experiences a reduced ability to process information.

Kiecolt-Glaser et al. (1993) observe that poor marital quality can be associated with greater likelihood of illness and symptom exacerbation. Hence, the connection between marital quality and health is said to be associated with physiological arousal during marital conflict. In other words, marital conflict is associated with elevated levels of stress hormones and down-regulation of the immune system. They propose that lower or poor marital quality is a result of immune system suppression. Therefore, greater immune function suppression can lead to dissolution of marital relationships.

Certain traits and behaviors in marriage and family have a stronger association with physiological arousal than others. For instance, negative behaviors such as Gottman's Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (criticism, defensiveness, withdrawal, and contempt) have been linked with increased physiological arousal. Positive behaviors have been attributed to lower stress hormones and lower heart rate during marital conflict.

Gender differences have also been argued as a physiological cause of conflict in marriage and family. Gottman (1999) maintains that after bitter marital conflict, men stay aroused and vigilant because they develop distress-maintaining thoughts. However, women usually rehearse relationship-enhancing thoughts to soothe themselves. During intervention after unpleasant marital conflict, women are more easily calmed than men, who are more likely to stay vigilant and reactive. Only when men have been given an opportunity to retaliate can they calm down.

Understanding physiological factors behind conflicts and crises in marriages and families can help the counselor to understand other variables that are responsible for the presenting problems.

The **Behavioral Factor** describes how certain habits and lifestyles cause conflicts in marriage and families. In his view on *circular causality,* Gottman (1999) proposes that each spouse's action in marriage is a reaction to the other spouse's action. In another theory known as *pattern of interactive behavior*, he postulates that couples usually bring to their marital relationships a set of uninfluenced stable steady states in behavior, thought, and physiology. However, this may be positive or negative based on each spouse's temperament and background. In other words, what each person brings to marriage, positive or negative, determines the pattern of interaction in marital relationships.

Gottman has developed a study known as *negative affect reciprocity* to ascertain the level of marital satisfaction and dissatisfaction in marriage. It shows that a spouse's emotional reaction is more predictably negative when his or her spouse's action has been grossly negative. This suggests that one partner is predisposed to be more negative all the

time when the other partner exhibits negative behavior to him or her. The important point is that negative action in marriage is a reaction to negative action. Gottman suggests that not all negative actions are harmful, only the four negative behaviors he termed The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: criticism, defensiveness, contempt, and stonewalling.

Harley (2008) describes six behaviors that can diminish peace and harmony in marriage. They have been termed *Love Busters* or habits that can drain the "love bank" in marital relationships, and include the following:

1. selfish demands, when one spouse tells the other what to do

2. disrespectful judgments, when one spouse imposes his or her way of thinking on the other

3. angry outbursts, when one spouse punishes the other until he or she complies

4. dishonesty, when one spouse hides certain truths from the other

5. annoying habits, behavior that is repeated by one spouse without thought to whether it bothers the other

6. independent behaviors, one spouse's actions or conduct that ignores the feelings and interests of the other

Other behavioral issues that need to be examined because of their contribution to the prevalence of crises in marriage and family life include money, in-laws, infidelity, domestic violence, and sex. A person's attitude toward money can be the cause of marital and family instability. It can become a serious issue in marriage if only one person is bringing money into the home, or if one person is making most of the money. In such cases, decisions about who controls the money can lead to conflict. The spouse who earns less may feel left out of decisions on spending, whereas the partner who makes more may

want to control and dominate decisions. Based on this researcher's pastoral experience and ministry among African immigrants living in the United States, money is the number one cause of tension in marriages and families. Because only a few couples maintain joint bank accounts, a great deal of financial mistrust and dishonesty exists among them. Even though they claim to be joined together as one in marriage, this is not the case when it comes to money.

The issue of in-laws has become another cause of conflict in marriage and family. Relationships between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, mother-in-law and son-in-law, as well as father-in-law and son-in-law are prone to generate tensions and conflicts in marriage. Possible reasons may be that mothers still want to hold on to the cords that tie them to their married children, whereas fathers assume that their sons-in-law cannot provide as adequately as they did for their daughters. Both fathers and mothers still want to exert control and influence over their married children. This usually creates behavioral tensions that can eventually lead to conflict.

Infidelity is another behavioral problem that can lead to crisis in marriage. Extramarital affairs or infidelity may take the form of either emotional or sexual relationships. In these times infidelity may also take the form of what is known as "cyberbetrayal." This includes online behaviors involving the use of pornography, secret chat rooms, romantic telephone chat, and indiscreet online emotional and sexual partners.

Domestic violence and abuse are behavioral monsters that disrupt the peace of any marriage and family. The World Health Organization notes that about 16 to 52 percent of women in every country have been physically abused or assaulted by their partners (World Health Organization, 2011). Patterson et al. (2009) observes a prevalence

of domestic violence and abuse in about 15 to 20 percent families in the United States. They point out two major types of domestic violence: patriarchal terrorism and common couple violence. In patriarchal terrorism the victimizer uses physical violence (such as battering) to gain control over the victim. In common couple violence couples and partners engage in simultaneous physical aggression with one another. Besides violence between marriage partners, child abuse is another form of domestic violence that can cause conflict in the family. Domestic violence in marriage and family can have immediate, temporal, permanent, short-term, and long-term effects on the victimized individuals.

Sex is a behavioral matter that can destabilize a marriage. God places a high premium on the sexual relationship within marriage, and has designed sex to enhance unity, companionship, commitment, intimacy, and pleasure in marriage. However, at times sex that is intended to bring pleasure to marriage can also bring displeasure, possibly as a result of sexual dysfunction in one or both partners. Wheat and Wheat (1997) describe these as organismic dysfunction in women and premature ejaculation in men. The husband may assume that his wife enjoys sex as he does, or that her slower response is her problem. The wife, on the other hand, may fake an orgasm and the enjoyment of sex in order to make her husband happy. Hence, sex that is expected to bring pleasure and means of spiritual unity as well as deeper understanding in marriage can become a source of dissatisfaction and displeasure when it is viewed as a duty or an obligation.

Abnormal sexual behaviors can jeopardize the stability of marriage and family. These include:

- *fetishism*, sexual fixation on an object other than a human being

- *transvestism*, sexual pleasure derived from dressing as a member of the opposite sex

- *sadism*, sexual pleasure derived from inflicting pain

- *masochism*, sexual pleasure derived from experiencing pain

- *exhibitionism*, sexual gratification derived from exposing the genitals to others

- *hypersexuality*, an excessive or insatiable sex urge

- *asexuality*, absence of sexual attraction to any person

Understanding the behavioral factors that lie behind actions and conduct that cause chaos in marriage and family can help the therapist to provide an objective assessment, an effective diagnosis, and a pragmatic treatment plan. Problems in marriage and family are the result of specific behaviors. Therefore counselors need to excavate or explore more deeply the roots of every behavior behind the presenting problem. At times the presenting problem may be the manifestation of a deeply rooted behavioral pattern.

Conclusion

Marriage and family therapy is more than talking and listening. It brings healing, treatment, and/or intervention to a presenting problem, not by trial and error, but with careful and proper planning. Marriage and family counselors need to have a conceptual knowledge of the intent, content, and context of treatment planning. It has been said that a failure to plan is a plan to fail. Hence, the success of every treatment in marriage and family counseling depends largely on planning. Even the Bible encourages planning. Proverbs 21:5 says, "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to

poverty." Treatment planning can help every marriage and family counselor to be diligent, organized, effective, and accurate, as well as an approved servant of God "who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

CHAPTER 6

A FAMILY CASE STUDY

The following case study of one family provides an overview of pastoral counseling. This particular family was chosen for the study because of the social, cultural, religious, and psychological issues embedded in their presenting problems. The study includes information about the couple vis-à-vis their family of origin and intergenerational effects, as well as a description of the assessment method used. Other elements include the treatment plan, a summarized verbatim account of the counseling session and setting, and deductive findings and conclusion. Names and identifying information have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Family Background

The pre-session familiarization discussion with the couple revealed that the husband is a pastor elder in his church and his wife is a deaconess in the same church. They recently left to attend another church. The man will be referred to as "Clement" and the wife as "Grace." Clement is 68 years old and Grace is 60. They have been married for 39 years and have five daughters. Three of their daughters are married; the other two are single and still living with them (ages 27 and 30). The family is African-American, Nigerian by origin, and lives in Providence, Rhode Island. Clement works for the state of Massachusetts, and Grace runs an African boutique store. In public they appear to be happily married, but they are not. Both claimed that not a single day goes by without conflict, and that it has been this way since the first day of their marriage. Clement and Grace sought for help to find out the cause(s) of their continual fighting, and what they can do to put an end to it. They lamented that they are not who people think they are.

The couple were born in the same town in Nigeria. Clement came from a polygamous Catholic family, the first child of eleven siblings. His parents were only able to provide him with a primary school education because of their poor living conditions and the large size of the household. After his primary school education, Clement spent five years learning the auto repair trade. Then he was employed United Motors, owned by United Africa Company (UAC), as a mechanic. He continued as such until he met his wife, through family arrangement, in 1976.

Grace was born into a Christian polygamous family. She is also the firstborn child, and has eleven siblings. Grace was unable to go beyond primary school education because her father did not believe in sending a female child to school. As a result, she learned to sew clothes and became a tailor.

After Clement lost his job at UAC in 1979, he came to live and work in the United States at the invitation of a friend. He came by means of a visiting visa, leaving behind his wife and two daughters. In the States, Clement learned more about auto repair, working in different shops. However, he decided to look for a job that would offer more work hours and more income so that he could provide for his family in Africa.

Clement enrolled in a truck driving school and in 1981 became a certified truck driver. He worked for reputable companies as a delivery driver, which afforded him enough income to take care of himself and his family in Nigeria. Around this time, Clement processed his legal residency papers and was approved in 1983. That same year he filed papers for his wife and two children, who were also approved, and they joined him in the United States in November 1983.

When Grace first joined Clement in the States she was a full-time housewife, but later decided to work outside the home when the family faced financial problems. She attended Certified Nursing Aid (CNA) training and became qualified as a CNA. After working as a CNA for a while, she quit in order to open her own shop selling African clothes and other items. The shop continued to grow, eventually becoming a business that has allowed her to travel to Bangkok, China, and Dubai to purchase African clothing materials to sell in her shop. In 2011 their two daughters Kimberly and Lydia took over management of the shop. Unfortunately, in 2014 the shop had to close due to negligence and mishandling.

Current Situation of the Family

The present socio-economic status of the family is a dysfunctional and chaotic situation. The family includes a father, a mother, and two daughters. Clement now works second shift at a State of Massachusetts rehabilitation center for mentally disabled individuals. Grace operates and manages a new shop in Massachusetts. The couple both claim to be socially active publicly, but apathetic at home. They love to attend social gatherings and occasions together, but do not engage with each other at home.

Kimberly and Lydia continue to live with their parents, even after graduating college five years ago. They refuse to look for jobs, instead taking over their mother's shop and business in Rhode Island. As a result, they have become their mother's close confidants, advisors, and friends, while leaving their father out of the system. Regarding this, Clement lamented that he always feels lonely and displaced in his family. He further revealed that they always conspire against him in the house and refuse to obey his instructions. Clement maintained that his wife has turned the hearts of their married

daughters against him by telling them that he is a bad, wicked, and violent. As a result, the five children have turned against him and do not regard him as a good father.

According to Clement, the family has severe financial problems. They have lost three homes to foreclosure, and both he and Grace have declared bankruptcy. Clement further revealed that he still owes several months of utility bills, but his wife is not ready to help pay any of the household bills. In response, Grace claimed that she cannot continue to be under the bondage and control of her husband, although she had been in the past when Clement used to collect all the money she earned from her CNA jobs. She stated that she will not allow this to happen again, maintaining that her husband brought her to America just to make babies and money for him.

Assessment of the Family

According to Hays (2013), family assessment is meant to assess the relational and interactional dynamics among members of the family. The chief assumption for family assessment is that it provides the counselor with necessary information and knowledge about how family interactions affect or have affected the problems at hand (Williams, Edwards, Patterson, & Chamow, 2011). Personality assessment of a family is used to measure or determine personal, emotional, social traits, and behaviors of each family member. Due to the nature and dynamics of this particular family, a modified version of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), DISC, and the Five-Factor Model (FFM) were used to assess the personalities in the family.

The principal goals for providing assessment for this couple included getting to know the nature of the family system, understanding each spouse's family and cultural background, and grasping how each partner's personality influences the presented

problems. The MBTI was used to measure the relationships between the husband and wife and among the family members. The Five-Factor Model was used to measure individual traits of the family members. Due to the counselees' low education level and the pastoral nature of the counseling, the assessment tools used were simplified and administered in the form of structured and unstructured interviews. Interpretations were based on Rohm (2008), Myers and Myers (1995), and other online resources.

Results of Clement's Assessments

Clement is a baby boomer born and raised in Nigeria. As a result of his father's death, he dropped out of high school (or grammar school, as it is called in Nigeria) after his third year (equivalent of 9th grade) in order to fend for his mother and siblings. He had informal training as an auto mechanic, and this was his occupation before he left Nigeria. In 1979, he came to the States in search of a better life for himself and his family in Nigeria. According to Clement, from his teens on he filled the role of father figure for his family after the death of his father. This made him independent, strong-willed, and hardworking.

At first, he was reluctant to attend counseling because of his religious and cultural backgrounds. Counseling is discouraged among Nigerians because there are few if any counselors in Nigerian society. Nigerians believe that there is no challenge or problem that cannot be solved within the family. Deviation from this would have to be abnormal, thereby requiring special help. Counseling is looked upon as a specialized field of psychology that deals with mentally unstable individuals. Hence, Nigerians associate the name "counselor" with the idea of a psychiatrist, and they view people who see counselors as having personal mental problems far more serious than those of the average

individual. Clement argued that as the head of his family or household, he could not discuss his family problems with an outsider. He claimed that young couples come to him and look to him for counseling or advice when they face difficulties in their marriages. Therefore, he asked why he could not solve his own family or marital problems. However, he and his family agreed to come to counseling because it was mandated by their senior pastor.

Clement agreed to commit to counseling when he knew that the counselor was from the same cultural background. He confessed that he thought counseling was for Caucasians or Westerners. After the first meeting, he was willing to open up and commit to the counseling sessions. Due to his education level, he was willing to take the simple versions of all the suggested personality assessment tests by having them read to him and accepted assistance to complete them.

The simple online version of the MBTI personality assessment test was administered to Clement. The purpose of the MBTI personality inventory is to make the theory of psychological types described by Carl Jung understandable and useful in people's lives. In other words, it is to provide couples with insight into their behavior. The test classifies an individual into one of two preferences in four different categories: Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I), Sensing Perception (S) or Intuitive Perception (I), Thinking Judgment (T) or Feeling Judgment (F), and Judgment (J) or Perception (P) (Myers & Myers, 1995). Clement's test result indicates that his personality type is ESTJ (Extraverted, Sensing, Thinking, and Judging). Below is the breakdown of the result when compared with other preferences and categories:

Extraversion = 95%   Introversion = 5%

Sensing Perception = 73%   Intuitive Perception = 27%

Thinking Judgment = 58%   Feeling Judgment = 42%

Judgment = 62%   Perception = 38%

Based on this personality type, Clement can be classified as a Guardian, Executive, Implementer, and Supervisor. A person with this personality type is generally practical, decisive, organized, forceful, rigid, assertive, results-oriented, conservative, and traditional (Myers & Myers, 1995).

The explanation of the preferences of Clement's ESTJ personality type as observed during counseling sessions are as follows:

E (Extraversion): He enjoys deciding what should be done in the family by giving appropriate orders on how it will be done. He is outgoing because he wants peace in the family; sociable as he loves to attend parties and events; and talkative because he dominates the discussion and loves to talk things through.

S (Sensing): His way of receiving and processing information shows that he is interested in actualities, facts, and details. He was able to recollect and narrate accurately all that happened to him from his early life to the present. He keeps records of all his documents, information, purchases, and transactions.

T (Thinking): He takes or makes decisions through rational and logical choices. He is at his best with the impersonal and able to handle things well if they are to be done impersonally. That is, he is more interested in things than in human relationships (Myers & Myers, 1995).

J (Judgment): He believes that life should be willed, decided, structured, scheduled, and organized. Clement wants all the members of his family to conform to his standard and principles. He always claims to be right.

People like Clement with the ESTJ personality type may be reluctant to try to change in their relationships as they move from the dating phase into more steady, long-term commitments and further into marriage. However, as long as their partner is able to take them at their word and follow suit, they are likely to be extremely stable in relationships (Myers & Myers, 1995).

Based on the paradigm and result of the Five-Factor Model (FFM) test Clement took, a synthesis or summary of his personality assessment would be examined under the following five domains of personality:

Physical (Extraversion): Clement's high result in extraversion shows that he is extroverted, assertive, enthusiastic, energetic and talkative. He is a strong man in good physical health. He revealed during the counseling session that daily exercise has helped him to remain active and healthy. At his age, he is still very hardworking and enterprising.

Emotional (Neuroticism): Clement's average score in Neuroticism shows that he is more relaxed, less emotional, and less prone to distress. He was very calm and solid throughout the period of counseling. He did not show any signs of anger, disappointment, hatred, or hurt toward his wife for all the accusations she levied against him. Instead, he was optimistic, realistic, and non-defensive.

Cognitive (Openness to Experience): Clement is not well-educated, but he is full of wisdom based on his life experiences. His low score in Openness to Experience

shows that he resists change and favors the status quo. His sharing during the counseling session was interspersed with tribal adages and proverbs. He values tradition more than anything.

Spiritual (Conscientiousness): Clement scored high in Conscientiousness. He is very organized and religious. His religious or spiritual life manifests itself in his acts of good work (mercy) and fighting for the cause of others (justice). He divulged that people call him "good father" because he loves to help people. The only problem he has is what can be called "messiah complex." Clement sees himself as the savior or messiah of his family, both immediate and extended.

Relational (Agreeableness): Clement's high score in Agreeableness shows that he is trusting, friendly, and cooperative. He is very tolerant and courteous in his dealings with people. He is appreciative, generous, and kind to his family, as well as people around him. He is a peacemaker and loves to help people to make peace with one another.

Results of Grace's Assessments

Grace was born and raised in a polygamous family in Nigeria. Her father was a farmer and her mother was a petty trader. Both of her parents were devoted members of an indigenous African church. She only made it as far as primary six (6th grade) before she stopped attending school so that the male children could attend. Grace joined her mother in the petty trade business for a while before she decided to learn to sew clothes. This was her principal occupation until she met and married Clement in 1976.

According to Grace, her early life was characterized by struggles, toil, hardship, rejection, neglect, and bitterness. She was willing to attend the counseling sessions

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because of her vulnerable condition. She affirmed that she has been subjected to hurtful and painful situations in life and has never been given the opportunity to share her feelings. Grace further confessed that she has repressed and bottled up considerable pain that has to be released. Therefore, she viewed counseling as way to relieve herself of these burdens. Grace agreed to attend counseling so that her voice would be heard, because her culture mandates that women be silent. She was also hopeful that her husband needed help.

The result of the MBTI personality test indicated that Grace's personality type is ISFP, which means: Introversion, Sensing, Feeling, and Perceiving. Here is the breakdown of the result compared with other preferences:

Extraversion = 27%	Introversion = 73%
Sensing Perception = 68%	Intuitive Perception = 32%
Thinking Judgment = 31%	Feeling Judgment = 69%
Judgment = 10%	Perception = 90%

Based on the result of this test, Grace can be described as gentle, quietly caring, sensitive, kind, compassionate, adaptable, modest, observant, idealistic, loyal, helpful, patient, spontaneous, and joyful (Myers & Myers, 1995). During the counseling sessions, Grace exhibited the characteristics of ISFP preferences in the following ways:

I (Introversion): She likes to have her own space and to work within her own timeframe. Although she appears to be gentle and simple, she is inwardly stubborn, subtle, and impenetrable. Unlike her husband, she knows how to restrain her emotion from exploding in public, only expressing it at home.

S (Sensing): Grace loves to observe things that happen around her. She is very sensitive to what people do and say around her, and to her husband (of which he is not aware). She was able to recall everything her husband did to her in the past, things he has forgotten about.

F (Feeling): She is very sentimental and superstitious. Even though she is passionate about whatever she wants to do, she is also unpredictable, easily stressed, and unstable, and demonstrates fluctuating self-esteem.

P (Perceiving): Grace is more curious than decisive. Her religiosity is based on her curiosity to try any Pentecostal denomination that claims to manifest and demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit. She revealed that she does not have a permanent church, but used to attend as many as three different Pentecostal churches or prayer centers in a year. She spiritualizes everything that happens to her, and she believes that she must engage in constant prayers of spiritual warfare in order to free herself from demonic attacks against her life and business. This is why she goes from one church to another.

Generally speaking, people with the ISFP personality type are quite mysterious and difficult to get to know. Because they are emotional people, they tend to guard this sensitive core carefully by preferring to listen rather than to express themselves. Even though they are shy in public, when they are alone with their partners, they show their real selves. Following is the summary of the five domains of Grace's personality based on the result of her Five-Factor Model (FFM) test:

Physical (Extraversion): Her low score shows that she is introverted, quiet, and reserved. Furthermore, her phlegmatic temperament has made her passive-aggressive,

sarcastic, obstinate, dull, disorganized, and sickly. Grace revealed that she has gained weight because of her inactivity and passivity.

Emotional (Neuroticism): The high score result shows that Grace is experiencing negative thoughts and feelings, and prone to insecurity and emotional distress. She looked very depressed, angry, anxious, worried, self-pitying, frigid, and tense. She continually stated that she has suffered a lot in life, as well as in marriage.

Cognitive (Openness to Experience): Her low score indicates that she is down-to-earth, less interested in art, and more practical in nature. Even though she did not have much education, she displayed a high level of imagination, insight, unusual thought processes, curiosity, and introspection.

Spiritual (Conscientiousness): Her low score shows that she is unorganized, less careful, less focused, and more likely to be distracted from tasks. This is the basis of her religious and spiritual instability, as she goes from one church to another seeking spiritual power and protection. For Grace, spirituality is a power encounter.

Relational (Agreeableness): Grace scored low in relational skill. Her score reveals that she tends to be more aggressive and less cooperative. However, she is more generous than her husband. She is very kind, caring, sympathetic, and compassionate toward others. She revealed that there is nothing too big for her to give to someone in need. She believes that she has the gifts of help and giving.

Marital and Family Nuances

Ever since Clement and Grace married in a way traditional way in 1976, they have been living like cats and dogs, as friends and enemies. The marriage has been characterized by resolved and unresolved conflicts, tensions, and misunderstandings, as

well as various forms of abuse (physical, verbal, and emotional). Sometimes they live like friends, yet often they live like enemies. This has impacted not only the marital relationship, but also the family dynamics. Before the discussion of the therapeutic treatment plan and method used with the family, it is necessary to highlight some of the principal nuances that predicated the conflicts and crises in the marriage and family under study.

Culture: The genesis of the crisis in Clement and Grace's marriage was their culture. They both indicated that the marriage was based on solidifying a friendship between their sets of parents. Grace confessed that she did not want to marry Clement, but she was forced to marry him to maintain the friendship that existed between her father and his father. This was a common practice in Nigeria at the time. Because marriage is viewed as taking place between two families, and not two people, it is a means of cementing relationships between the two families.

The family has also experienced the dilemma of culture shock, similar to that experienced by other immigrant families in the United States. They face the issue of cultural adaptation or adoption, as well as enculturation and acculturation. Since they came to live together in the States, Clement and Grace have always struggled with how to maintain balance between the culture of their country of origin and the country of immigration. For instance, Clement is a traditional and conservative person who wants to adhere strictly to his cultural mandate. However, Grace sees the United States as a land of freedom and liberty. Furthermore, their five children who have been raised in the States have become deeply acculturated to American culture. Hence, the variations in cultural values, norms, and more generate tension and crisis in the family.

Communication: Petersen (2007) observes that good communication in marriage and family is like oil that lubricates the engine of relationship; without it, the engines will cease to function well. Likewise, Parrot and Parrot (2006) describe communication as the lifeblood of every family and marriage. Rainey (1997) submits that communication in marriage resembles what blood is to the human body, and if it is removed, the marriage will collapse. Unfortunately, Clement and Grace's family lack good communication skills. Communication in the family can be described as pronouncement, command, and talking at instead of talking with. As the head of the household, Clement decrees what is to be done in the family without considering the opinions of his wife and children. Therefore, communication in the family is always a monologue, not a dialogue.

In response, Grace usually resorts to passive-aggressive modes of communication. She typically holds in a deep-seated anger which she feels unable to express directly. Instead, the hostility she feels manifests itself in subtle behaviors that undermine the efforts and ideas of her husband. The couple reported that the children play along with their mother. They complained that their father is dictatorial, bossy, and authoritarian in his communication. The children accused him of failing to involve other members of the family in decision-making because he believes that his words are final.

*Triangles and Triangulation***:** A triangle is a three-person emotional configuration or relationship system considered to be the basic building block of any emotional system, like a family (The Bowen Center for the Study of the Family, 2015). If the triangle represents a hypothetical way of thinking about structure in human relationships, then triangulation is the process of emotional reaction that occurs within the triangle. The dynamic of the emotional triangle was observed in the family during

counseling sessions. The instance and prevalence of the emotional triangle observed in the family was between the mother and the two daughters living with them.

Because Clement has been very bossy and domineering and will not listen to his wife's opinion, Grace has taken refuge in the comfort of her two daughters. She claimed that because she did not have anyone to talk with, she decided to confide in her daughters. Grace maintained that ever since she took her children as her confidants and friends, she has felt better. However, the problem is that she and her daughters have become formidable allies against her husband. Unfortunately, this has empowered and enabled the daughters to disobey, disrespect, and behave in an unruly manner toward their father. In other words, they only listen to their mother and the three of them make decisions together, even against their father.

Although Grace enjoys this alliance with her daughters, Clement feels that life at home is like "living in hell." He claimed that because his household has turned against him, he is always afraid to come home after work. Clement said that he was depressed and sad at home because his wife and daughters do not respect him and gang up against him. He lamented that despite all his efforts to provide a good education and good living for his children and family, he never thought that they would turn against him.

Enmeshment and Disengagement: The emotional disconnection that exists in this family is another observable cause of family conflict. The family can be described as enmeshed because of the fanatical cohesion and dependence on each other that exists. It can also be regarded as disengaged because each member of the family is passively independent of another member. Even though each member of this family (Clement, Grace, and two daughters) maintains his or her individualism, independence, and

disengagement, everyone still depends on Clement for the payment of utility bills, the mortgage, the maintenance of vehicles, and other household chores. Clement complained that even though his wife and daughter work and earn incomes, they depend on him for payment and maintenance of everything in the house. He has become the family handyman. Grace and her daughters maintained that Clement would not allow anybody in the family to do anything or have a say about anything. Therefore, they have saddled him with every family responsibility on him. They alleged that because he started it, it has become part of the family system.

Spirituality and Denominationalism: The prevalence of differences about spiritual orientations and denominational preferences has become another conflictual issue in this family. Benner (1998) describes spirituality as human longing, craving, and yearning for God or a being who serves as the focus of self-transcendence and meaning for life. He further describes two types of spirituality: speculative spirituality and affective spirituality. The former emphasizes God through the mind or rationale; the latter through experience or emotion. Clement can be viewed as speculative in his spirituality, whereas Grace is affective. Clement embraces a conservative and orthodox type of spirituality that believes that God is experienced or encountered through the mind and study of the Bible. Grace on the other hand holds to a Pentecostal and charismatic type that emphasizes emotional display of spirituality. As a result of this dichotomy, the two of them cannot agree on a church to attend together. Clement attends an Evangelical church, Grace attends a Pentecostal church, and the two daughters attend a new generation blended church. Hence, a conflict of doctrinal, theological, ecclesiastical, and

denominational differences and preferences exists within the family. This has fractured the spiritual unity of the family.

Dysfunctional Multigenerational Transmission: Both spouses in marriage derive their biological and psychological endowment through their multigenerational family system. Because marriage is a joining of two family systems, dysfunctions in the multigenerational family system or family of origin may predicate the number of conflicts in the relationships in that system. Clement and Grace are products of a dysfunctional multigenerational system. Both are from polygamous families, and both claimed to exhibit emotional reactions at home as a result of a lack of differentiation in their families of origin. Furthermore, Grace's excessive emotional fusion and projection toward one daughter has resulted in the daughter's emotional malfunctioning. At age 26, she refuses to get engaged or enter into any kind of meaningful relationship because she finds it difficult to fall in love.

Treatment Planning and Goals

The family goal for counseling was to find a solution to the described nuances that are causing dysfunctions within the family. They desire to put an end to the protracted crises, conflicts, quarrels, and misunderstandings in the family. They confessed that although the family appears to be healthy on the outside, it is very unhealthy on the inside. This indicates that every member of the family has been living in denial and pretension. They want coherence, understanding, appreciation, peace, and harmony in the family. Clement and Grace confessed that they needed to put their home in order so that after their death their children would not reap or perpetuate the seed of discord and disharmony that exists in the family.

Counseling began with the initial contact. It was initiated by their pastor who was also a chaplain at the hospital where the writer was doing his internship. When the pastor learned that this writer was a marriage and family counselor intern at a hospital, he requested service through the director of the chaplaincy center who was also the writer's supervisor. Upon her approval, this writer agreed to provide counseling.

Clement and Grace called to schedule an appointment with the writer; this was the initial contact and first interview. During this meeting a general introduction took place between the counselor and the counselees. Then the counselees were briefed on necessary information about the counseling process vis-à-vis ethical guidelines, intake form(s), informed consent and confidentiality, and assessment/personality tests. At first Clement was unwilling to commit to counseling, but he later changed his mind. However, the couple did not consent to video or audio recording of the counseling sessions. During this first meeting, all the necessary information about them was gathered as well as a discussion of the presenting problems.

Following the first interview, an assessment of the family was conducted. The first assessment explored the presenting problems that brought them to therapy. No one could be labeled as an "identified patient" because the family dysfunction was collaborative and all-inclusive. Asked when the problems started, Grace replied that they had existed since the couple married. According to Clement, they had existed since Grace joined him in the United States.

The next assessment inquired about their attempts to solve the problems. They revealed that they had spoken with their pastor who preached to them and asked them to pray, but nothing worked. Next, psychological and personality assessments were

completed. These instruments were used to understand the family members'

temperaments and personality types, and the behavioral condition of the family with

regard to the five dimensions of personality (physical, cognitive, emotional, relational,

and spiritual).

The treatment plan was developed to define the problems to address and the

interventions to be used. The problems presented by the counselees and uncovered during

the assessment included culture shock, communication issues, triangles and triangulation,

enmeshment and disengagement, spiritual forms and practices, dysfunctional

multigenerational transmission, financial mismanagement, denial, and marital

dissatisfaction.

Because this counseling scenario was pastoral, the Solution-Focused Pastoral

Counseling (SFPC) method was chosen as the form of counseling intervention to be used.

This method of counseling involves finding solutions to problems, rather than explaining

them. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) or Solution-Focused Therapy (SFT) is the

basis for SFPC. This counseling model focuses on clients' ability to identify their own

problems and create their own solutions (Clinton & Ohlschlager, 2002). In constructing

the SFPC model, Kollar (2011) argues that counseling does not have to be long-term, but

rather can produce effective results and be short-term.

Along with the treatment plan was the construction of treatment goals. These

were consistent with the overarching goals of SFPC, as well as the expected outcome of

counseling. Hence, the major goal of SFPC is to assist counselees to change their

perceptions about the situation and to empower them to work out solutions to the

problems. Construction of treatment goals for the family under study was cocreated

through the use of questions. For instance, when asked what they expected to have happen at the end of the counseling sessions, Clement and Grace said that they expected peace, harmony, understanding, financial stability, and closeness to God, as well as to one another in the family.

In consultation with the clinical site supervisor, the length and frequency of the counseling session was discussed with the family. Because SFPC is expected to be brief and solution-focused, six sessions of 90 minutes each were agreed to. Each session had a beginning for discussion, a break for digestion, and an end for recapitulation. At the end of the six sessions, with the approval of the supervisor, family was given a referral.

Psychological and Theological Components of Counseling Model

The counseling model used was Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling (SFPC). This model was developed by Kollar out of Solution-Focused Therapy (SFT) or Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT). Unlike traditional counseling models that focus on the past and what caused the problems, the SFT or SFBT model focuses on the present and possible solution (Corey, 2009; Nichols, 2010). The basic assumption of this counseling model is that people or clients are capable of providing solutions to their problems. Therefore, part of the task of counselor is to redirect counselees from talking about problems to talking about solutions. According to Greenberg, Ganshorn, and Danilkewich (2001), SFT "is a counseling model that puts the client into the driver's seat as an expert of self-care" (p. 2290). In other words, this model makes use of client's ability to identify the problems and create the solutions. In SFBT, counselors do not consider themselves experts, but counselees themselves are considered experts in solving their own problems.

Like SFT or SFBT, the focus of Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling involves providing ways of encouraging counselees to focus on solutions rather than on problems. According to Kollar (2011), "Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling (SFPC) offers an alternative to all problems-focused counseling approaches, whether they come from the Bible or from secular counseling models" (p. 9). The basic assumptions and rationale for SFPC as described by Kollar (2011) are as follows:

1. God is already active in the counselee

2. Complex problems do not demand complex solutions

3. Finding exceptions helps create solutions

4. The counseling is always changing

5. The counselee is the expert and defines goals

6. Solutions are cocreated

7. The counselee is not the problem, the problem is the problem

8. The counseling relationship is positional

9. The counselor's focus is on the solution and not on the problem.

The four basic components of SFPC are: *attentive listening* to validate counselees' feelings, *asking questions* that will encourage the initial goal as well as helping the counselee to imagine life without the problem, *clarification* with questions to shape and describe the counselee's desired initial goal or vision, and *feedback* to promote support and change (Kollar, 2011).

The first theological component of SFPC counseling model is that every counselee has in God all the resources he or she needs to solve his or her problem. In other words, the SFPT model can help counselees realize, actualize, utilize, and

maximize their God's given potentials for change as well as finding solution to their problems. This is in keeping with the word of God that says, "I can do all this through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13). In SFPC, the client is a co-creator of solutions, whereas the counselor is very much the expert at facilitating the process. Therefore, SFPC empowers counselees to be what God wants them to be.

The second theological component of SFPC is the role of Holy Spirit in counseling. Kollar (2011) argues that the counselor can work out solutions with the counselee when the Holy Spirit guides the counseling process. Therefore, reliance on the work of the Holy Spirit is very important in SFPC. According to Kollar (2011), SFPC "cocreates solutions along with the counselee. This is in keeping with the creative influence of the Holy Spirit, who is always in the process of creating solutions, moving us forward in our faith" (p. 45). Hence, SFPC acknowledges the Holy Spirit as the Greatest Counselor.

The third theological component of SFPC is the primacy of the word of God. In SFPC, counselees are helped to be doers rather than hearers alone. Because the model's use of the Bible and other helpful material is very important in SFPC, counselees are assigned spiritual as well as educational homework. Stone (2001) writes concerning the importance of homework, "Doing homework emphasizes parishioners' agency; it places the responsibility for change squarely on their shoulders and ensures that changes occur not only in the rarefied environment of a counseling session, but in the person's day-to-day life" (p. 100). Doing the Word is an important part of moving a person from where they are to where God wants them to be. This exemplifies what James 1:22 says: "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says" (NIV).

The final theological component of SFPC is transformation. This counseling model believes that every counselee is made in God's image and that He is at work in the individual's life. His plan for the individual is to grow. Hence, SFPC maintains that everyone needs a second chance as well as an opportunity for a new beginning. The counselor is to help the counselee in making decisions that focus on what God wants for his/her life, which is transformation. According to Kollar (2011), "Christianity assumes that the only way for lasting change is through the conversion that transforms the counselee from the inside out, a transformation that begins with surrendering to God, receiving the gift of life in Jesus Christ, experiencing the conviction of his Holy Spirit revealing sin, and undergoing the unfolding process of sanctification" (p. 234). The task of the pastoral counselor is to move people from where they are to where God wants them to be. As Benner (2003) puts it, "The main goal of pastoral counseling is the facilitation of spiritual growth" (p. 35).

Summary of Counseling Sessions

Session 1   There was a phone call to make the appointment. Clement and Grace arrived for counseling. There were intake interviews, sharing of information, and the completion of necessary forms (informed consent and confidentiality). This was followed by a question about what brought them to counseling. They were also asked: "What do you expect to happen to you that would make you know that our working together has been successful"? After answering this question, they were also asked, "What is the first step you are willing to take to make this happen"? This was

followed by this miracle question: "Suppose that by the time you wake up tomorrow a miracle happens and the problems that you are having are gone, what would that be"? They were given homework to keep track of good things each of them is doing.

Session 2   They came back after two weeks. At the beginning of this session, this question was posed to Clement and Grace: "What can you say has been a little bit better since you came here last"? After sharing their experiences, they were commended for their efforts and given another homework assignment. They were to read 1 Corinthians 13:4-10 and put into practice all that love does in their marriage.

Session 3   With the permission of their parents, as well as their own approval, Kimberly and Lydia (the two daughters living with them) came to counseling. This session was for them, excluding their parents. They were asked to describe good things that ought to be happening in their family that are not happening now, and how they can help to make them happen. This session occurred two weeks after the second session.

Session 4   This session took place three weeks later. Clement and Grace confessed that they had begun to notice changes in their daughters, as well as in their relationships. They were asked to rate their level of satisfaction in the relationship on a scale of 1 (terrible) to 10 (great). Both of them rated it as 8. They were commended for their

efforts. They suggested the following steps as things they could do to make things better: attend the same church, start a family altar, and call to check on one another. They requested a meeting with all of them, including their two daughters, in the next three weeks.

Session 5	Clement and Grace, along with their two daughters, came for this session. They were asked to evaluate how things have been in the family before and now. They revealed that things had been chaotic in the past, but are better now. When asked about what other things needed to be done to bring peace and harmony into the family, Kimberly and Lydia mentioned the issue of financial mismanagement. They all agreed to seek professional help in this regard. They were promised a referral. The next session was scheduled for three weeks later.
Session 6	Clement and Grace came back. They shared their joy and experiences so far. They have been attending the same church, praying together, and calling one another often. They were eager for the referral to a financial management class. They were referred to a place called Urban Ventures where such assistance is provided. The counselor promised to call them for follow-up.
Note	Each session began and ended with prayer.

Findings and Conclusions

Working with the family has been a wonderful experience. Providing pastoral counseling for them was an act of grace bestowed by God. It also helped to put into

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practice all that this author has learned in this Doctor of Ministry program. Helping the family has revealed the dynamic of the sinful nature in human relationships. The nuances observed in the family are manifestations of the fallen nature. They are like tares planted among the wheat and can only be handled by God. However, God has chosen the ministry of counseling as a means of handling them.

The drastic change witnessed during and after the counseling sessions shows that God is always at work to provide change in people's lives. It also demonstrates that there is no mess that God cannot heal. The importance of an integrative approach to pastoral counseling cannot be downplayed. It adds knowledge to faith. This integrative approach has helped to provide a counseling ministry to the family under study, and has continued to be of help to other families as well. Solution Focused Pastoral Counseling, which is an offshoot of Solution Focused Brief Therapy, has proven to be a good approach for use in pastoral counseling.

The goal of pastoral counseling is to facilitate spiritual growth and closeness to God. It is not to make people happy, but to make them holy. This is what happened to the family under study. They found their way back to God before they found their way back to one another. What made this happen was a combination of faith and knowledge, theology and psychology, revelation and information, calling and education, as well as prayer and relationship. This is what makes pastoral counseling a unique ministry.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Olusegun J. Martins

Place of Birth: Ifon, Nigeria   *Date of Birth*: July 3, 1963

Address: *Phone:* 931-338-5661
Salem Gospel Mission International   *Email*: josegmart@yahoo.com
The Chapel of Peace
607 Potters Ave
Providence, RI 02907

Education:
DMin, 2010 - Present   Marriage and Family Therapy, Gordon-Conwell
Expected Graduation   Theological Seminary.
May 2017

M.A., 2006   Pastoral Counseling, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA.
CPE Unit 1, 2005   The Chaplaincy Center, Rhode Island Hospital, Providence,
                            RI.
M.A.T.S., 2001   Theological Studies, Nigerian Baptist Theological
                            Seminary, Ogbomosho, Nigeria.
BA.TH, 1994   Theology, ECWA Theological Seminary, Igbaja, Nigeria.

Positions Held:
Senior Pastor   Salem Gospel Mission International (The Chapel of Peace),
                           Providence, RI, 2007 till present.
Intern   CODAC Behavioral Healthcare, East Providence, RI,
                           2014 – 2015.
Intern   Sojourner House, Providence, RI, 2013-2014.
Intern   Rhode Island Hospital Chaplaincy Center, Providence, RI,
                           2012 – 2013.
Chaplain   Rhode Island Hospital Chaplaincy Center, Providence RI,
                           2008 – 2009.
The District Overseer   Salem Gospel Mission International, North America, 2005
                           2015.
Provost   Salem Bible College, Nigeria, 1998 – 2004.
Local Church Pastor   Salem Gospel Mission International, Nigeria, 1983 – 1998.